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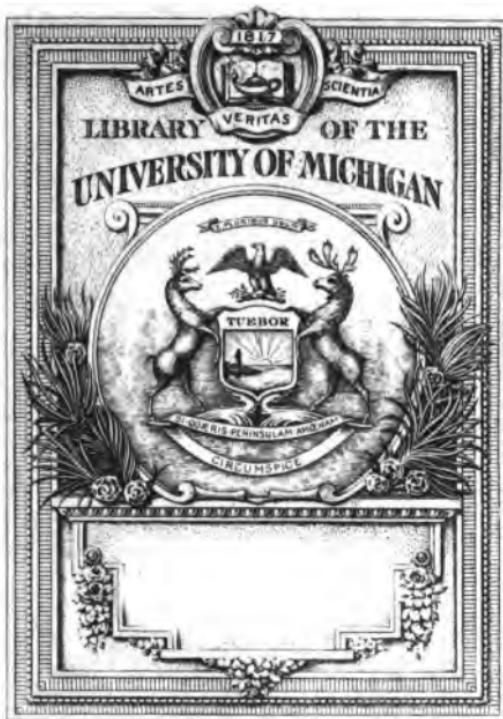
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By
Julian Conant

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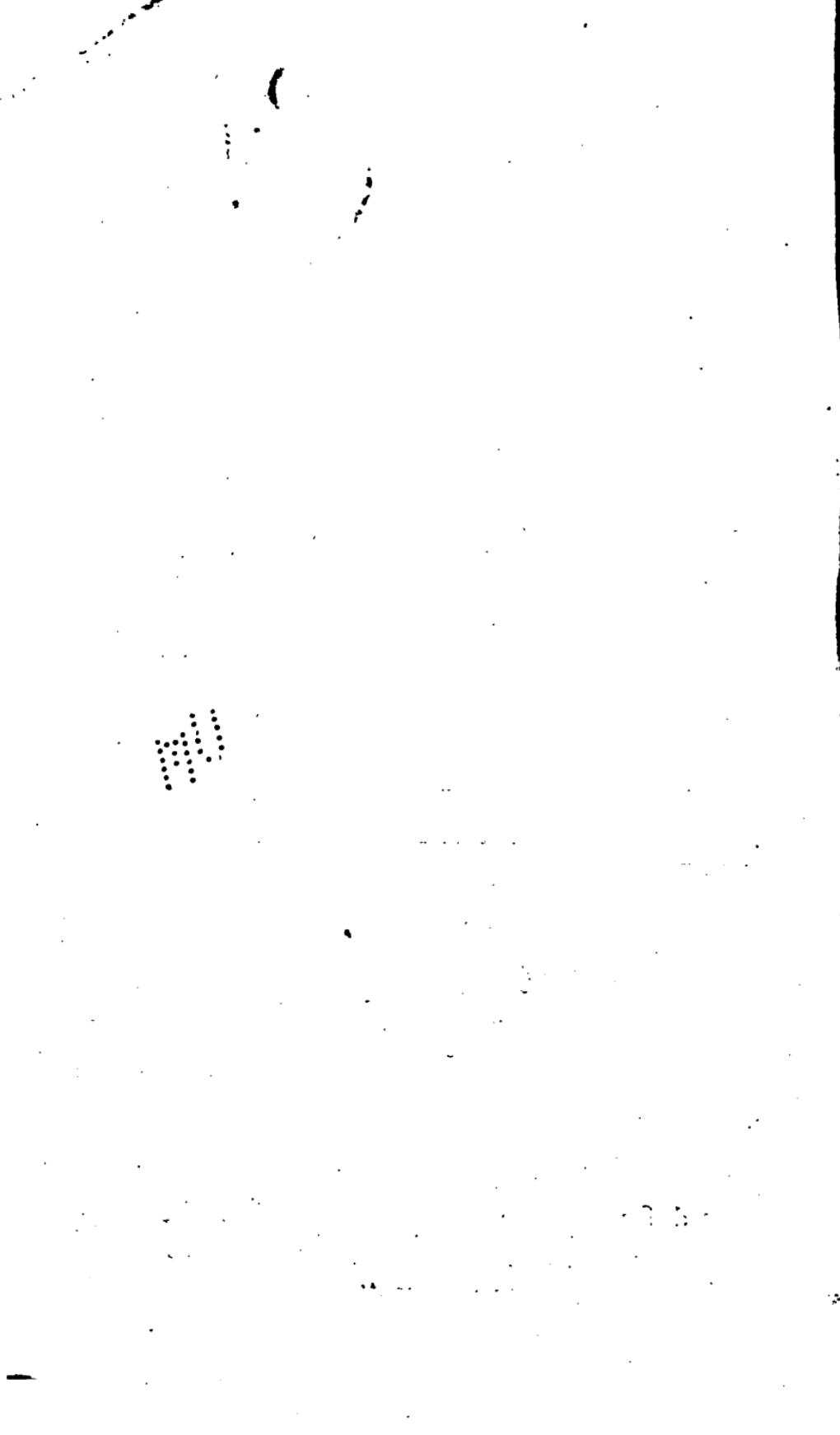
A
COLLECTION ⁴¹/₁₅
OF
LETTERS and ESSAYS,
MORAL and POLITICAL,
SERIOUS and HUMOROUS:
Upon Various SUBJECTS.

The SECOND EDITION.



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WALTHER, over-against the
Royal-Exchange, in Cornhill.
MDCCXXXII.





Advertisement.

 T has been justly observed, that if a Man were to keep a constant Register of all the Opinions he had entertained upon Love, Politicks, Religion, Learning, and every other Object that employs or amuses the human Mind, it would in time swell to a prodigious Medley of Absurdities and Inconsistencies. Yet this is a Task which a writer of Occasional Essays, an observer upon the Times does in some measure undertake; and this observation ought to stand in Excuse for some of his *Faults*, especially to such Persons as have Sense enough to reflect properly upon the Wandrings of their own Imaginations.

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The Contradictions and Repugnancies which must be the Consequence of a Man's setting down every Observation he makes are charged home upon *Montaigne*, and the Essayists in general, by *Ben Jonson* in his *Discoveries*, about a Hundred Years ago, and I believe that the World by this Time is universally convinced of the Truth of his Accusation; tho' the Fault he complains of is reckoned so trivial as hardly to need an Apology. And therefore the Author of the following Discourses attempts to offer none for such Inconsistencies as others may find in them, on the contrary he owns his Surprize that upon a Revisal so few should appear to himself.

There is one thing however that may be said in favour of all Authors of this Class, that when Letters (especially those of Humour) are written under a fictitious Character, the Writer of them is no more accountable for all the Opinions advanced in them, than a Comick Poet is chargeable with the Sentiments he

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he puts into the Mouth of a foolish or wicked Person of his Drama.

Most of the following Essays are cursory Observations made upon things as they appeared, and therefore the Dates are annexed to them, in order to call back the Reader's Mind to the Scenes which were then in the Writer's View, which perhaps in some Places may be necessary. They were all published either in the *London* or *British Journal*, on the Days they bear date; and tho' many of them were favourably received, they are not now republished from any Opinion of their Excellence, but to refute the Calumny of a rancorous and foul-mouth'd Railer who has asserted in print that the Author of them wrote *several Scurrilities* in those Papers. It is owing to this that some are here printed, which his Judgment would have obliged him to suppress, but he thought himself bound to produce all he had written; which is here done, except an inconsiderable Number upon political Subjects

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jects in the Controversial Way, which could not now be understood without reprinting (which he has no Right to do) those Discourses of others to which they were either Answers or Replies.



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T H E



THE SPECULATIST.

Of NEW S.

IHAVE some Time ago seen a Prodigy, a printed Half Sheet, under the Title of a News-Paper, (and noe publish'd by Authority,) without one Article of Intelligence, either Foreign or Domestick; the Prices of Stocks, and a Crowd of Advertisements, thos Advices from the lower World, made up the whole Account. What this could certainly mean, I am at a Loss to discover; but if Conjectures have any Weight, this happened to be one of the Author's penitential Days, which it seems he determined solemnly to celebrate by a religious Abstinence from these Tropes and Figures, which, to be sure, must lie heavy upon the Consciences of all News-Writers, that have any. But what this strange Phænomenon does portend, we may venture to say with more Certainty, if added to other strange Appearances which we have lately

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lately seen: It presages a Dearth of News; and what the Consequences are like to be, I tremble to disclose: But the lightest Calamity we have to dread, is, that our Speculative Tradesmen and Coffee-House Haunters will be in Danger of being reduced to the deplorable Necessity of having little else to mind but their own Business.

How heavily the Anger of Heaven is to fall upon our Fraternity, with Horror I foresee. We have, like a Number of our Readers, lived, for some Time past, upon the Hopes of good News. Every Day, every Paper was barren of present Entertainment, but pregnant with something great to come. The Affair of *Thorn* (but, alas! that's in a fair Way of being hush'd) promised, for a while, something like a Harvest; but it is lost. We had almost conceiv'd the Dawn of a Hope, that a War might grow out of the Pique between *France* and *Spain*; and another in *Italy* we thought as good as begun; but all our Hopes are vanished: Though some Gentlemen of my Acquaintance have been at the Trouble of drawing up several pretty Descriptions of Battels, Sieges, and Skirmishes, in elegant Language, and full of smart Reflections, which would be very useful in case of a War, as having Blanks for the Names of the Parties, victorious and vanquished, and the Scene of Action, so that they might be ready for the Press at a Minute's Warning; but are now, to their great Grief, little better than so much waste Paper.

But, alas! what shall we do? *Thorn* is over; the *French* and *Spaniard* like to be at Peace; the *Spaniard* and *German* fixed Friends; and *Jonathan*

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nathan Wild equipp'd for another World. Methinks, I behold my Brethren scratching their Heads, and pumping their Inventions, for a small Stock of Intelligence, to march before a Squadron of Advertisements, which, in Time, will dwindle away and desert, for want of Leaders: and when they have got a Piece of News, behold them exerting the OEconomists, and managing it with a world of good Husbandry, to make it last as long as possible: In one Day's Paper you shall see it fairly and impartially told; in the next a Difference in a small Circumstance; in a third, turned inside out, and new dressed, like an old Coat; and so on, till it will bear no more Turning. I cannot help recollecting, upon this Occasion, a Passage, which bears some Resemblance to such Practices. My Victualler in *Sheer-Lane* was one Day, as I walked into the Kitchen, spitting a Piece of Flesh, which I thought had no very good Aspect: I asked him what it was: To which he very frankly reply'd thus: *It's a Piece of Beef, Master, that was boiled all last Week, but I bad no Fortune with it: Now I'll roast it, mayhap God may send better Luck; but if he should not, I intend to baste it next Week.*

I thank God and the Parliament, that I have nothing like this to fear for my self; my Situation in the Tail of the Week makes me little better than a Collector of Intelligence, to vend by Wholesale; and our Legislature, by wholsome Severities, have reduced me to so moderate a Size, that after I have scrap'd together a Stock of Observations from our Diurnal Authors, I shall have little Room left for Inventions of my own, if I were so inclined; nay,

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I shall often be forced to pare my Collection of its superfluous and suspicious Articles, in order to bring it within my Compass, and that way save myself a world of Sins. Nor is this a contemptible Advantage which we draw from the late *Malt Bill*,* which, though most of us Journalists grumbled at for a while, like the Citizens at their Bill, yet, like that, in the main, will be found, in some measure, for our Benefit, since what we thought would be only a Burden to our Purses, will prove also an Ease to our Consciences.

But, in order to want no Room for necessary Truths, I must intreat my kind Correspondents, who now and then furnish me with initial Essays for this Paper, not to be so prolix in their Writings: my Readers, in general, love News, to which the Letter in the Frontispiece is not so properly the Sauce as the Grace. It is then certainly ill-judg'd to make them wait, like a Fanatick Preacher, till their Stomach palls, and their Food cools; no, let them, in God's Name, fall to while it's warm, and they'll digest it the better. I would also, if I might with any Decency, advise them not to be so serious, or so much in earnest in what they write upon these Occasions: It is idle in us to encroach upon the Province of the Pulpit, as we very often do in long moral and religious Essays. It is good to be merry and wise, quoth the Proverb; let us then join to make our Readers so: If my Correspondents will be so good as to be very pleasant and fa-

* The Bill which first impos'd a Stamp upon Journals, and reduc'd them from three half Sheets to one.

cetious

ceous in the witty Part of this Journal, I will undertake to be profoundly sage and learned in the historical Part.

Our Taste for News is a very odd one; yet it must be fed: And tho' it seems a Jeſt to Foreigners, yet it is an Amusement we can't be without, and certainly arises from a Sense of Liberty, which inspires us with a Curiosity to know the Actions of our Superiors, in order to censure, or applaud them, as we see Cause. *Spencer*, in his *View of the State of Ireland*, has a whimsical Story; with which, without considering whether it be applicable or no, I shall conclude this Discourse. He says, ‘ The Inhabitants of that Kingdom were, in his Time, prodigiously fond of News, (I am sure their Prosperity may retort the Observation upon his Countrymen at this Day,) insomuch, that a French Man, who had spent some Time in that Country, meeting with a Gentleman whom he had known there, at Paris, as soon as the first Civilities were over, asked him, with Abundance of Earnestness, whether his Friends had heard any Thing of the News they had lost, and made such frequent Enquiries for, while he was in Ireland,

July 3, 1725.



The SPECULATIST.



Of PUBLICK PAPERS.

To &c.

SIR,

I Am encouraged, from your last Paper, to become your Correspondent: This Letter shall lay down the Plan by which I design to proceed; which if you like, and my Humour holds, you may expect frequently to hear from me.

THERE is hardly a Quack in this great Metropolis, who does not, in his Bills, give out that he has a Sufficiency of Skill to defeat the most violent Attacks of every noxious Distemper: In like manner our Weekly, or Diurnal Authors promise a Cure for almost every Vice or Folly which does, or may, infect the Minds of their patient Readers; tho' there have been found some, in both Professions, who have modestly pretended no farther than to apply Remedies to one single Malady: For Example, the Author of the *Gout-Stone* in Physick, and the Author of the *Independent Whig* in our Way.

I confess, those worthy Precedents have such Weight with me, that I shall, in my present Character, assume no more than one Province, tho' Envy will allow 'tis a most difficult one, and such as, well managed, will render my Glory immortal. I shall apply my whole Skill, Time, and Labour, to the correcting and curing

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ring that intollerable Itch of Scribbling, which is, at present, so epidemical, and withal so baneful, that, like a Leprosy, it renders the Infected unfit for the Society of the rest of Mankind. The Lawyers inform me, that of old there were legal Methods for removing infectious People from the Company of the Clean and Unspotted; and indeed, I am told, that something like that has been often practised on our scribbling Gentry, but without Success. They still went on in their Follies, and by that sufficiently shew'd their want of Worth. The melodious Nightingale will only sing at Liberty, amidst the Groves, while Parrots and Magpies are meanly content to chatter in Cages.

But why I, who have the Marks of Uncleanliness upon me, should undertake this arduous Task, will be wonder'd at, and Men will be apt to say, as to the Fox in the Fable, *Doctor, cure thyself;* but all such Jests I bar, and must inform my Cavillers, that a Man of Skill, from a Knowledge of his own Disease, may, in some measure, be able to prescribe to others in the same Condition: Besides, as all Nations that have Wisdom express it in their Proverbs, there is a homely one in our Tongue, that will at once be a Reason for my engaging in this Affair, and a Proof of my Ability for the Performance of it. This Proverb I can't decently repeat, therefore will only say, *That the Success of the famous Jonathan Wild has made it almost oraculous in his Way.* And I hope my Practice will give it little less Credit in a manner something different.

I don't despair of Encouragement from the Publick, when they shall know what Labour

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and Expence I am at in their Service ; the Reams of Nonsense I must read in Coffee-Houses, and the Drams I must drink to digest them ; add to that the Fatigue of travelling from House to House in search of some Papers, which are hardly any where to be found but at the Printer's, who is perhaps known by nothing less than the Printing of them. I must also, in Justice to myself, let the World know my Impartiality in this Affair : As I chiefly design a Satyr upon Dulness, I would condemn nothing that deserved better Usage ; and if any Piece that comes under my Censure, happens to have ten good Lines in it, I declare I will spare the Whole for the sake of them. To this End, I am at the Expence of paying a Critick, who is to make a faithful Report of the Beauties which he finds in the Writings of my Contemporaries ; but as I apprehend his Place will be but a *Sine Cure*, I own I have not set him down at a very large Salary. All these Things consider'd, I hope I shall find Favour in the Sight of my Readers ; and I believe the Coffee-Houses will be so true to their own Interest, as to take in this Paper, since no prudent Person would refuse Entertainment to a Weasel, whose House was pester'd with Rats.

I will not make Professions of the publick Spirit which inspires me to begin this Work, that is a Vanity I shall not imitate my Brethren of the Quill in : I have no Right to such an Honour ; for it must be confess'd, that their Motives are of a very public Nature, since they generally are to procure Food and Rayment, without which the World would be in Danger of losing not only the Writings, but the Lives of

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of such excellent, such knowing Men, as themselves.

But, to return to my Design, as I intend this for a Satyr upon Dullness, Writings of that Nature will most frequently pass thro' my Hands; nor will it be wonderful if I catch the Infection, so far as now and then to discover Symptoms of the Disease; and if I sometimes nod, it must be attributed to the great Quantity of soporiferous Stuff I am oblig'd to take down. Humanity is frail; and it is observ'd, that all Pests are in the same Degree contagious as they are noxious: The Physicians that attend infected Houses, tho' never so well prepar'd, don't always escape; and sure my Danger will be pitied by all who know what I am to go through, down from the volatile Insipidity of the *Weekly Journal* to the tasteless Stupidity of the *Post-Man*.

To be serious for a while; I would not be understood as if I meant to give no fair Play to any that came under my Censure: I declare that I will not, under Pretence of criticising any Man's Writings, throw in scandalous Hints relating to his Life, Character, or Morals. I think the Man a Villain who stabs in the dark; and such a Proceeding is no better. Tho' I disclose my own Name, I have no Right to expose another's: I have a great many Reasons to believe that a Man may be a very honest Man, and a most damnable Writer; and it's more than probable, that I may have some Acquaintance with the Author whose Works I censure most; for which Reason, I hope he'll consider my Opinions only as Pieces of Advice to himself, tho' the World may look upon them as Satyrs on his Writings.

Always

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Always provided, that nothing I have said here shall exclude me from my Right to all the little Sarcasms, weather-beaten Ironies, and other Common-Place Jests, which I look upon to be an inexhaustible Fund of Wit and Learning, and which have been, Time out of Mind, the Plunder of my Predecessors in this Way, and are now the sole Subsistence of my modern Brethren. I shall reserve to myself the Liberty of animadverting in every Style and Manner; in Verse or Prose; in the Serious, the Gay, the Moral, or the Jocular, according as my Humour and the Subject happen to agree, or the Season, and the Temper of my Readers happen to require. I had almost forgot to insist upon my Right of Praising, if any Thing deserved such Usage: I hope I shall be allowed it, tho' I have already hinted, that I believe I shall not have Occasion to trespass often in that Way upon the Indulgence of my gentle Reader.

Tho' the Correction of Petty Scribblers be my chief Design, yet, like the main Action of the *Drama*, it may be heighten'd and embellish'd by the interweaving of Episodes and Under-plots, which serve to give it a graceful Variety. Upon this Account I shall be sometimes tempted to animadvert upon other Writers in other Ways; nor shall the Stage nor the Pulpit escape my Notice: I shall now and then honour them with a Lash or an Encomium, as they shall proceed to deserve: I shall also sometimes visit the Sins of the Authors upon their Readers, and lend a helping Hand to the curing of such Follies as Men have contracted by an ill Diet of Reading, or a Want of the Exercise of Reflection.

I have read in the Works of some Freethinker, that Priestcraft damns more Souls than it saves; how that may be I won't venture to determine: But this I will assert, that Books corrupt more Understandings than they improve. The Liberty of the Press is not so great a Mark of our Freedom, as the Redundancy of Pamphlets is a Symptom of Decay in our Sense. It is in Reading as in Business; idle People are more intent on what belongs to their Neighbours than their own; by which Means every one contracts a Way of Thinking unsuitable to the Character he is to sustain in Life. I have known a Lawyer who knew more of *Euclid's Elements* than of *Coke's Reports*, and a Divine who was better acquainted with the Odes of *Horace*, than the Psalms of *David*: Yet these were thought Excellencies in them; as if a Man who reads what he should not, might not as well be idle any other Way. These and such Enormities I shall touch on in the Course of this Work; and if I have any Success, it must be imputed to extraordinary Skill, since no Fool is so hard to be brought to Reason, as a Fool of Learning.

It may happen, that now and then some other Follies shall come under my Correction: This I don't give out as if I intended a Deviation from my first Design, but to encourage my Correspondents to give me their Thoughts upon every Subject worth Reprehension; and so make myself at least instrumental in their Endeavours to cure such Diseases of the Mind as I don't pretend to make my own Skill reach to.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

July 10, 1725.

WILL. SHARPSIGHT.



Of MOTTO'S.

To GE.

SIR,

HERE is nothing which gives me so profound a Veneration for our modern Writers, as their vast Learning, tho' my Passion is increased by the bounteous Liberality with which they bestow it upon us, their ignorant Readers. An Author cannot publish a Two-Penny Paper without letting us know that he reads the Clas-sicks; and tho' we don't find that in the Work, because perhaps 'tis foreign to his Discourse, yet in his Frontispiece he never fails to strow his Knowledge plentifully among us: I have often met at the Top of a Half-Sheet, a Page and a Half of classical Learning; perhaps the Author had made a Vow to have something good in his Paper; I always construe Things for the best: But I never met with the meanest of them, who did not endeavour to persuade you by his Title Page, (a Caution not always unnecessary) that he had read Somebody's Works besides his own, tho' it only happened to be the Productions of some of his ingeniuous Cotemporaries.

A Motto, as at present managed, is a Rag of Latin or Greek made up into a kind of poetical Forehead-Cloth, which our Authors wear without considering its Aptness, Propriety, or the Stuff it is made of. Authors chuse Motto's to their Works, as Esquires do Crests to their Arms, without any regard to Decency or Judgment,

ment, but meerly for Fancy's sake. A bright Passage in the Front of a Work, has justly been compared to a Star in the Forehead of a Horse; and therefore it often happens, that when they don't naturally grow, Men torture both Horses and Writings in order to procure them: But here the Comparison fails in one Thing; we only torment the Horses we have a Property in, but our Spleen always falls upon the Writings which don't belong to us.

I always imagined that a Motto ought to be a Sort of a Text, from which all the ensuing Discourse may be supposed to be drawn; but I find my Mistake, from the Practice of our best Writers: I can never observe the least Correspondence between the Text and the Body of their Composures: A fine Passage is all they aim at; and a fine Passage they generally make use of. Mr. Addison prettily defines a Motto to be a *Word to the Wise*; but they are far from thinking a *Word to the Wise sufficient*, since they often cram them with more than a School-Boy's Lesson.

If we enquire into the Original of Motto's, we shall find that in the beginning they were short pithy Sentences which the Antients used to strike on their Coin, oddly surmising, that Wit and Money ought to go together. From thence it will follow, as Mr. Addison observes in his Treatise of Medals, that a Motto, in its primitive Purity, should be Succinct, Apt, and Pointed; that is, it should entertain with its Conceit, be proper to the Occasion it was made for, and be short enough to be engraved on a Piece of Money. A certain great Poet has written a fine Copy of Verses in Praise of the Treatise above

bove mentioned; which yet we will do him the Justice to believe he did not read, since he has so little observed the Rules laid down in it: He is contriving a Medal to be struck in honour of his Patron, and recommending a Motto proper to be inscribed in *lasting Notes* round the *Orb* of it, which he does in these Lines.

*Statesman, yet Friend to Truth, in Soul sincere,
In Action faithful, and in Honour clear;
Who broke no Promise, sought no private End;
Who gain'd no Title, and who lost no Friend:
Ennobled by himself, by all approv'd,
And prais'd unenvied by the Muse he lov'd.*

Now, in the Name of God, is this an Inscription for the Orb of a Medal, or a Milstone? Sure I am, it's large enough for the latter: His Friends here are a little puzzled to excuse him; but I think it's easily done, by recollecting that the Medals were to be of *pure Gold*, and that he might reasonably expect one of them for his Pains.

But to return to our Authors: It would be hard to compel them to measure either their Wit, or their Learning, by their Money: tho' I am sorry to say, that many of their Readers do it for them. However, it may be right to caution them, that false Wit and injudicious Learning will no more pass in the World of Letters, than counterfeit Coin, or clipp'd Money, in the World of Busines. That Affectation of Learning which we find in a Title-Page, creates a shrewd Suspicion, that we are to expect none in the Book. I am not for depriving ingenious Men of all manner of Motto's; no, I would encourage

courage them to find out something very pat, and very proper, but above all, let it be very short; and if they can think of no such, I fancy they may omit a Motto with more Credit to their Sense, than insert an ill one with Reputation to their Learning.

But there are other Motto-makers, besides Authors, who call loudly for a Censor: Look on all the Coaches of Quality that on a fair Day are to be seen at the Ring; and how few of them have either Propriety of Thought, Elegance of Language, or common Sense, inscrib'd upon them? Indeed, this is a large Field: But I decline it, when I reflect that it is making war upon Heralds, a Set of People as destitute of Understanding, as those that employ them. Besides, there can be no good Reason given why my Lord's Motto should have more Propriety or Reason in it, than his Coat of Arms.

I will conclude with an Advice to all Dealers in Motto's, that can't be cur'd of the Habit, That they use no other Methods in their choice of them, than the Ladies do in chusing Lap-Dogs, where the Smallness is always the best Recommendation: A little one can do all the Offices of a larger, and is not quite so troublesome in the Carriage.

I am Sir,

Your Humble Servant,

July, 17. 1725. WILL. SHARPSIGHT.

Of



Of THIEVING.

To &c.

SIR,

PERHAPS, you'll think that I am wandering beyond my Province, when I engage to give you in this Discourse a Panegyrick upon Thieving: But I expect that you will not debar me from this Opportunity of making my Court (and perhaps, by so doing, of making my Fortune) to several of my good Patrons in Office; for whose sake I have undertaken to prove that Filching is as old as the World; that it has been the Practice of all Ages and Nations; that the best of Men have endeavoured to keep it in Countenance: And in short, that without it, we had had, as the Song says, neither *Philosophers, Poets, nor Kings.* In a Word, I think I can prove that all Men are Thieves, tho' very few have the Honesty to confess it.

The first Theft was committed in *Paradise;* and the first Thief was our universal Mother, to the Honour of the fair Sex be it spoken; who, influenced by so good an Example, have to this Day kept up their Laudable Appetite for Pilfering, as appears by the numerous Complaints you hear of doleful Swains whose Hearts have been purloined. In this I think they have got the Start of us; we can prove our first Sire no more than a Receiver at best; and the Proverb will not allow the Receiver to be as good as the Thief.

After

After this no Body will controvert the Antiquity of this Art: It remains then, that something be said for the Honour of our own Sex, who, tho' they cannot boast of being the Inventors of it, yet I hope to shew, that they have made as many Improvements on it, and carried it to as high a Pitch, as it would bear. The Jews stealing every Thing they could *wrap and rend* from the *Egyptians*, at their Departure, is an Exploit that we shall come in for at least half the Glory of, tho' it should be allowed that the Ladies, as it often happens in modern Marches, carried the Knapsacks, and the Men only bore their Arms.

He must be very ignorant of History, who knows not that the *Egyptians*, a learned and wise Nation, held this Art in such high Esteem, that they punished severely ignorant Pretenders to it: Antient Writers assure us, that a Theft cleverly performed, intituled the Artist to the Booty purloined; but if he was so awkward, as to be detected before the Completion of his Purpose, he was turned over to the Hands of old *Father Antique the Law*, as *Butler* says,

*For daring to profane a Thing
So sacred, with vile Bungling.*

The *Lacedemonians* were so well appriz'd of the great Use and Advantage of this Art, that they early instructed their Children in the commendable Practice of Filching; and every one knows that the *Lacedemonians* were always reputed a wise and famous People, tho' it be certain that no other of the polite Arts or Sciences ever got footing amongst them.

C

So

So remarkable an Instance as that of *Romulus* must not be omitted: He very wisely rak'd together a Parcel of Thieves; and they became the Progenitors of a Set of People, who, while they kept up to the *Virtues* of their Ancestors, were the most powerful, the most learned, and the most polite Nation in the World. But when they grew rich, and their Opulence set them above practising those Virtues, they dwindled into nothing.

That it has been the universal Practice, (and often the only Knowledge) of all Philosophers, will be evident upon a Comparison of their several Notions and Systems. I would avoid an Ostentation of Learning in this Place, or I could make my Reader stare at my profound Sagacity, in discussing the Tenets, and discovering the Thefts of the Antients one from another; but familiar Examples will be more suitable to the Genius and Capacity of several of my courteous Readers, and therefore I content my self with putting them in mind of our modern political Pamphleteers, and when they reflect what a Swarm of them, a few odd Notions, purloined from *Machiavel*, *Hobbes*, *Harrington* and others, have set up, they will readily subscribe to my Assertion. I have often heard it urged, in Opposition to my Scheme, that these Gentlemen were Borrowers, but not Thieves. To which I answer, he that borrows more than he can pay, is but a more cunning kind of Thief; and if that won't do, I must call the Law to my Assistance, that is, the Opinion of a famous Attorney-General, I think it was Sir *Francis Bacon*, who, when a seditious Pamphlet was laid before him, to see if it would bear a Prosecution for Treason,

Treason, answered, that there was no Treason in it, but a World of Felony, for it was mostly stolen from *Cornelius Tacitus*.

But lest any of my gentle Readers should be scrupulously observant of this Essay, and enquire here which I intend to praise, the Art or the Artists; I must own, that in the last, and the ensuing Examples, I intend to do Honour to both, and that I mean Philosophers and Poets, when I say, O happy Men that can thus quit Scores with your Art, and bring it into as much Reputation as you receive from it.

It is too obvious, to need a formal Proof, that the Poets in all Ages have been Thieves, and that they grow every Day greater Proficients in this Art; tho' for their Honour, as I said before, it may be hinted. But I will shew, that it is in their Constitution; that they could not exist without it: It is one of the first of their Rules, and always the best observed. A Right Reverend Author, who about two Centuries ago wrote a famous Art of Poetry, most frankly avows this, when he says, in his third Book,

*Sæpe palam quidem rapiunt, cupiuntque videri
Omnibus intrepidi, ac furto lætantur in ipso
Deprensi.—*

And a little after

*Ergo agite & tecum securi accingite furtis
Una omnes Pueri, passimque avertite Prædam.*

Horace is a little more cautious in declaring himself; but his own Practice shews him to be of our Opinion: He only hints the Thing to his Disciples,

*Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna.*

The S P E C U L A T I S T.

Now a Scholar of any Genius must find to what Purpose he recommends the Reading of those Greek Authors, especially when he hears him soon after say,

*Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus
Interpres.*

To prevent Detection as much as possible: Upon the whole, I can't but say, that *Horace* was the most discreet in his Instructions, and the best Thief in his Practice, of the two; and gave to, and received more Honour from both the Arts he was concerned in, than the other.

It may astonish our *Jure-Divine* Men, to see me meddle with the Characters of Kings upon this Occasion; but as I do it to Honour them, I hope I may pass uncensured. In the World's Infancy, it must be confessed that Kings were no better than great Robbers, for want of Conduct enough to be genteel Thieves; but for many Ages since, they have prudently left the Business of Knocking o' the Head and Plundering to their Generals, and staid themselves securely at Home, stealing away the Liberties, and picking the Purses of their loving Subjects. And certainly this was a more prudent Part, and harder to manage; as it requires a better Genius to be a Pickpocket, than a Footpad; for which Reason they have long ago grown tired of this also, and delegated the Drudgery of it to Ministers of State, of whom a great many have in all Ages been very capable Men, and acquitted themselves of so weighty a Charge very handsomely.

I am, Sir,

Your Humble Servant,

Aug. 7. 1725.

WILL. SHARPSIGHT.

ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

Of English HOSPITALITY.

THE following is the Translation of a genuine Letter from a French Gentleman here, to his Correspondent in Paris. The Enormities complained of are set in a true Light; they are such as are well known, and call loudly for the Pen of a Satyrift: But we are of Opinion that all the Wit they could be attacked with, would not contribute so far towards a Reformation, as the simple Narration of this Gentleman; from whom our Country-men may learn, and blush at what Foreigners think of them.

— *Pudet bac Opprobria nobis
Ex dici petuisse, & non potuisse refelli.*

SIR,

AMONG a great many kind Things in your last Letter, I find myself best pleased with the Compliment you make my Observation, from the Niceness of which (so you are pleased to expres it) you expect a more accurate Account of the Manners and Genius of the People among whom I sojourn, than you have hitherto received. Now, tho' my Undertaking to satisfy your Curiosity must inevitably overthrow that kind Opinion of me, yet my Gratitude for your having once entertained it, irresistably compells me to give you some few Remarks upon this Nation, which, tho' obvious,

I think have escaped all Travellers that have hitherto wrote about it.

The *English* would be thought (and in some measure are) a brave, generous, and hospitable People: I shall confine my Remarks in this Letter to their Hospitality, because it is so much their Boast as to become proverbial amongst them.

Well then, as a Proof of this Hospitality, they mortally hate all Strangers, not excepting their Fellow-Subjects, the *Scots* and *Irish*, who live under the same Laws, and speak the same Language. But because this is held to be only the Vice of the Vulgar, let it pass as unworthy of Censure, and proceed we to an Inquiry into the Manners of their Superiors, in order to examine their Title to this boasted Hospitality, which they pique themselves so much upon, that the greatest Part of the People here believe it to be the Growth of no other Country.

I had not been here many Days before I fell into the Acquaintance of an *English* Nobleman, who affected the greatest Fondness for me as a Gentleman Stranger, and seemed to take a more than common Pleasure in my Company: He invited me to his House and Table with the greatest Frankness imaginable, which gave me the more Ease in accepting it. Well, I went; I dined: The Entertainment was Excellent, the Goodness and Elegance of the Feast, the delicate Choice of the Wines, and the Behaviour of the Giver, was, as I thought, the fullest Proof of *English* Hospitality. As I left the House, to increase the Magnificence of my Treat, a whole Train of Servants were drawn up in Rows in the Hall, and lined the Passage to the Door.

I went on very little observant of them, tho' enough to perceive them more than obsequiously, and, as it were, importunately civil. I met my noble Friend soon after abroad; was again invited, and pressed to consider the Invitation as a perpetual one. I was amazed at such elegant Civilities, and went again with high Sentiments of the gallant Deportment, and polite Humanity of this Nation towards Strangers. To be brief, the Entertainment came nothing short of the former, and the Behaviour of my Lord was, if possible, more frank : But an impertinent Neglect of me, had, as it were, possessed all the Servants, in waiting, so that neither my Character of Gentleman, nor the Respect with which they saw their Lord treat me, could procure me, in any Thing I called for, to be readily or willingly served. I need not tell you, I left this Entertainment with less Pleasure than the last: But as soon as I met any Gentlemen of my Acquaintance, I conferr'd with them, whether I had not been ill used, and whether my Lord ought not to have observed, and punished the Restifness of his Servants. Every one that I applied to, immediately, and without staying to ask me, said, That I had distributed no Money among the Servants at my first Entertainment, as was the Custom. I was amazed at what they said; but more so, when they assured me, that every Person invited to a Gentleman's Table, loses by the Favour done him; for that he is obliged to drop more Money among the Servants, than would entertain him with equal Splendor at a Tavern, among Company of his own chusing: That this Practice was known to, and encourag'd by all that kept Servants,

Servants, to whom it saved something in the Wages: That it was kept up for other politick Reasons: That it was a sort of Intrenchment to Tables of Quality against Hangers-on, and poor Relations. Good God! said I, call ye this Hospitality, to invite a Man to a Feast, and then make him pay for it! I say no more; but when they catch me at their Tables again, I'll give them leave to eat me.

I made more Inquiries into this strange Custom, and was not a little shocked to learn, That People of Condition, when their Guests were gone, called up their Servants, and took an Account of what they received; by which they squared their own Expences, when invited by any that were then their Guests. I have been Informed also, that some Gentlemen, to avoid the Trouble of distributing it themselves, have given to the principal Servant a Sum sufficient to serve all the rest, if justly divided; but because such have been often found cheating their Fellow-Servants, to remedy that, it was not uncommon to leave it in their Master's Hands. Nay, a Gentleman of much Honour has assured me, that lying one Night, with a slender Equipage, at the House of a Country Friend of his, he, in the Morning, left five Guineas in the Master's Hand to be so divided; which was more by two than the best Inn could have cost him.

Another strange Instance of this National Churlishness, is, that Custom of Clabbing, as they call it, or paying every Man his equal Dividend of a Tavern Reckoning. Strange! that Men should eat, drink, and enter into the greatest Familiarities with others, whom they would not

not treat with a Crown! Tho' I ought not to pass over this Practice, without doing it the Justice to confess, That it deserves some Praise on other Accounts; it keeps up an Equality among the Company, which is of great use in Conversation; as it furthers the Improvement of Knowledge by bringing together Persons of Different Talents and Opinions, who all utter their Sentiments freely upon the Strength of this Equality; while it is but too often the Case in our Country, that the Guests are influenced by their Complaisance for the Person who gives the Treat.

But a viler Practice than any of these is yet to be told; and tho' it be not done by the better Sort, yet their Connivance at it is sufficient to make it a national Vice, and draw upon it the Reproach of such. You know that in our Country, and in all the other Countries that I have travelled into, it is the Custom to shew Strangers the Curiosities of the Place, with the greatest Readiness and Alacrity, without expecting, may, without daring to receive the least Gratuity. Far otherwise is it here: Nothing is to be seen, gratis; every Curiosity they have has a certain Price, which you must pay for the Sight of, to a shameful Extravagance: But what renders this Practice more scandalous, is, that it prevails in sacred Places; and that in Churches, which have vast Revenues annexed to them, if there be any Thing curious, a Symonical Profit is made of it, to the Disgrace of Religion, and Disparagement of the Clergy. Another petty Enormity is practised in Churches, of which you can have little or no Notion: They have here in every Church little Seats, which

which they call Pews, boarded up for the Convenience of the rich People of each Parish: Now, if a Stranger comes in, tho' his Appearance be never so genteel, yet must he stand without a Seat, to be elbow'd and trod upon by the *Canaille*, except he softens the Sexton's Heart with a Bribe, and pays for his Place as in a Play-House: With all Reverence I make the Comparison.

But to shew, beyond Dispute, the inhospitable Avarice that reigns among this People, this Instance shall suffice: Several of the great Men have built fine Houses, which engage the Curiosity of the World to see them; and here a certain Price is fixed for the Sight of them, which the Owners wink at, to save the Charge of a Servant's Wages for shewing them; nay, some of them are accused of sharing with their Servants in that vile Profit, and making a large Revenue of it, which may well be, considering the Multitude of Visiters, and the exorbitant Rates that are payed for seeing such Buidings.

These Things will amaze you; but upon my Honour they are no less than Truth; tho' so little pleasing, that I doubt I have tired your Patience with them. I therefore conclude, referring my other Remarks to a better Opportunity, with all imaginable Respect.

Yours, &c.

August 21, 1725.

A. V.

of

Of SATYRISTS.

SIR,

I Am an Author of the Town, and sorely against my Will a Preceptor to Mankind: How little I am thanked by them for my Instructions, you will apprehend when I inform you, that I write this in a Coffee-House, at an Hour, when by the Retirement of all other Company to Dinner, the Room is very quiet and perfectly fit for study.

I am not so Idle as to deceive my self with an Opinion of my own Genius, nor is it any Passion for Glory that sets me a scribbling: However I don't think my Talents inferior to those of several merry Folks, who make free with my Reputation. I am shocked to death, when I hear my Writings made the Test of my Understanding, since they are Things I don't labour, from a Despair of excelling in them; yet I flatter my self, I could fill a less envy'd Station in Life, with more Credit, as well as Content: But it may not be. This is not an Age for a Man to rise in, whose only Interest lies under his Hat. I remember when I was a School-boy, my Master has often told me, that eating was very bad for Study; now I think they're even with each other, for I find by Experience, that Study is very bad for eating. Sure I am, that had I a Son to breed now, whom I wished should thrive in the World, I would sooner send him to be Butler or Valet to some Man of Quality,

lity, than to either of the Universities. It is owing to an universal Disregard to Learning, that from a Profession whose best Prompters are Ease and Idleness, I am forced to extract a Narrow Sustenance by Toil and Industry. Well, Industry I find is a Virtue, for it rewards it self; and between you and I, Sir, whatever the old Poets and Moralists may pretend, it's the only one, as I know of, that does so.

The Number of Patrons I am forced to solicit, and the little Regard I meet with among them, throws upon me the Character of a Prostitute: But, alas! would People consider how few of our Men of Quality can read or understand the Works of a modern Wit, they would no longer blame me for endeavouring to search among all Ranks and Parties for those happy distinguish'd few. Yet this Censure, shocking as it is, would soon fall to the Ground, if I had solicited with any Success; but Poverty, that constant Bane and Attendant upon Wit, draws on me the Ridicule of all Mankind. The Man that has Poverty for his Companion, bears about him a Multiplying Glass, thro' which the unkind World takes a View of his Faults.

But the greatest Grievance of all is, that the Poetical Tribe, Fellows as poor as my self, and as silly, have got me in the Wind. It is so natural for a Fool, with an imbroider'd Coat, to think a Man untrim'd his Inferior in Understanding, that I can bear it without Uneasiness; but to be hunted like a devoted Buck by those of my own Species, is dreadful and intollerable; yet this has been my Case. I have the Misfortune to wear a Name that fits well in a Verse, and I think merely for that Reason has never escaped

escaped a Place in the Satirical Writings of my Cotemporaries. The first that has lately made free with me, was the Ingenious Author of the *Battle of the Poets*: He is, I believe, a good-natured Man, and his Poetry very gentle and harmless; he wronged his Judgment in writing Satyr; he has done me no other Injury, than by shewing the Way to the Whimsical Author of the *Equivalent*, who in a Poem, in which he flatters his Patron, for the Place of *Poet Laureat to North Britain*, most aptly takes an Opportunity to shew his Talent for Satyr, as it were to awe him into a Compliance by shewing his own great Force that way. This wondrous Youth has here, among many others, got hold of my Name, to which he joins a very tart Epithet, and for a very good Reason, it Rhimes to the preceding Line. In this Manner he goes on, making vast Havock among his Cotemporaries, and Triumphing as if taking Possession of his Place, which I think they are all agreed to hope his Patron will procure him, provided he be obliged to perpetual Residence upon it.

The modest Gentleman who wrote a Satyr, which he calls the *Authors of the Town*, has been kinder to me: He has not directly named me, but given broad hints of my Character, and discover'd a Design to abuse me: But however as he only meant it, and as his Hand at drawing Characters keeps the Originals from a Danger of being discovered, I have no Wrath against him: We are very good Friends, and I hope shall continue so.

But to come to the chief Occasion of this Letter; You, Sir, frequently publish the Writings of one Mr. Sharpfight, who threatens strange Things

Things against us miserable Writers of the Age. Now, Sir, as I don't know this same *Sharpfights*, I don't think it my Duty to bear an Abuse from him as tamely as from my Friends before mentioned, therefore if you have any Influence upon him, intreat him, as he tenders his own Safety, to take no Liberties with me: I have discovered a Method of defending my Reputation against such *Insolent Attacks*, unknown to all Authors who have lived before me. I can call in the Law to my Assistance; and I do hereby assure all People that read my Works for the future, that it will not be safe to dislike them in the least, or Question my Capacity for such Undertakings.

But to shew the Ingratitude of the World; this Project, which I by a deep Inspection into the Laws and Statutes of this Realm have discovered, I lately communicated to a Brother Author, the ingenious Mr. Ozell, who has fore stalled me in it; and tho' the Use he makes of it be Laudable, viz. punishing the *false and scandalous Aspersions* of two Booksellers, who have the Impudence to Judge for themselves, yet I can't forgive the Falshood of this Gentleman— But I mistake, a Gentleman he can't be, who runs away with another Man's Project, and I wronged my self when I called him Brother Author, for by a Curious Observation of the Laws and Statutes aforesaid, I find that Writing originally is the Work of the Mind, and consequently a genteel Employment, while Translation is little better than Manufacture, and of course a Mechanick Busines.

But to return to my Project; I will convince the World how feasible it is by this Argument. An Author's Reputation is as dear to him as a Merchant's,

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Merchant's, and consequently an Author should have Redress for the Loss of it as well as a Merchant, which he must procure by an Action of Slander; which must be try'd, as usual in such Cases, by a Jury of Wits, who are to be presump'd best qualify'd to judge of the Case, and assess proper Damages; but indeed I confess my self a little gravel'd at the Difficulty the Sheriff will meet with in filling a Pannel of Freeholders among those Gentlemen.

But lo! the Room begins to fill, and therefore I hasten to a Conclusion. I advise all my gentle Readers to consider of this Scheme, and not put themselves within their Author's Power: I am sure if every Body that reads my Works, were strictly to examine their Consciences, I should not be call'd half so many Fools. A Writer has been sometimes compared to one that does Penance in a Sheet, and therefore Men think they have a Right to upbraid him with his Faults; but I must inform the World, that even this is by the Ecclesiastical Law adjudged Defamation; but lest that should have no Effect, and as the Comparison between a Poet and a Whore will run through the whole Compafs of their several Vocations, I will beg leave to apply to my self the following Epigram, which a merry Friend of mine pin'd to a Sheet, in which a Lady was wrapp'd, who did Publick Penance for Incontinence.

*Here stand I, for Whores as great
To cast a scornful Eye on;
Should ev'ry Whore be doom'd a Sheet,
You'd soon want one to lie on.*

I am, Sir, Your Humble Servant,
Septem. 4. 1725. PAUL POORWIT.

~~SECRET HISTORY OF ENGLAND~~*Of EMBASSADORS.*

THE late Indignities offered to his Majesty in the Person of his Minister Mr. Finch, are what gave occasion to the few following Hints relating to the sacred Character of an Ambassador, and the due Regard that all civiliz'd Nations have ever paid to that Person whom a Monarch has thought proper to make his Representative amongst them.

The Love of Peace, and the Advantages flowing from thence to Society, were what first gave Occasion to the sending Embassies from one State to another; and as these Advantages were of great and equal Importance to all Mankind, it was universally, tho' tacitly, agreed to give the largest Immunities, and pay the greatest Honours, to the Persons who labour'd to procure them. This Opinion is among the foremost of those which compose what they call the *Jus Gentium*; and has hardly ever been infringed but by the most barbarous and uncivilized People; nor often by them: but when it has been, was always highly resented by the Commonwealth affronted; and is by all speculative Politicians accounted one of the best and most justifiable Reasons for beginning or carrying on an offensive War: as indeed there is not an Instance of the Breach of it, that has not been attended by such or worse Consequences.

Holy Writ furnishes us with one Instance of the Truth of this last Position. *David* sent certain

tain Embassadors to *Hanun* the Son of *Nahash* King of the *Ammonites*; to comfort him upon his Father's Death; in return to which friendly Message, the jealous Barbarian, imagining the Messengers rather Spies than Embassadors, treated them with the highest Indignities; and offered them the most outragious Insults; which their Master resenting, rais'd an Army, discomfited the *Ammonites* and their Allies the *Syrians*, punished severely the first, and made the last sue for Peace, and offer a Condition that they should assist the *Ammonites* no more.

Another Example of this just Revenge, we find in the *Roman History*. The People of *Achaia*, then Allies and supposed Friends to the Commonwealth, gave some Jealousy to the Senate by an ill-concerted Behaviour to their open Enemies. Embassadors were sent to require an Account of this, who for Answers received Scoffs and Revilings; but such was the Moderation of the *Romans*, that they sent others to demand the Reason of this Usage; which others were by those insolent People refused Audience; nor could they procure themselves to be received at all in the Quality of Legates from *Rome*. This so incensed the Senate, that they gave Orders to their General *Metellus*, then at the Head of an Army in *Greece*, to chastise the Insolence of the rash *Achaians*; which was effectually done, by the sacking and plundering their famous Metropolis *Corinth*, and reducing all the Inhabitants of that Country to the Condition of Slaves and Vassals to the Commonwealth.

Many more Instances might be given, but these will be sufficient to confirm this Point:

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And since we have shewn what has not been thought proper Treatment for an Ambassador, let us examine what is; which we shall find very different from that we have mentioned. An Ambassador is every where considered as the Proxy of his Master, and has with very little Diminution all the Privileges and Immunities, the Rank, Precedence and Distinction, which his Master in Person would be intitled to, in the Dominion of another Prince. So sacred is that Character, that when once a Man is invested with it, he is no longer subject to the particular Laws or Customs of such Countries as he passes thro' or resides in, like an ordinary Traveller; he is obliged to observe none of their National Injunctions; but while he refrains from what is *Malum in se*, runs no Risque of incurring the Penalties of *Malum prohibitum*. Nay, it takes away all Blemishes; and, like the Descent of our Crown, purges all Disabilities of the Wearer; insomuch, that a Rebel or an Outlaw of one Prince may be sent to him as Ambassador by another; nor is it lawful to offend or molest such an Outlaw while he bears that Character. That was in Part determined when the Pope sent Cardinal *Poel* in that Quality to *Francis the First of France*: Our *Henry the Eighth*, then in Friendship and Alliance with the *French King*, demanded the Nuncio as his Subject and a Traitor; but upon mature Deliberation, his Request was deny'd, and these Points resolved by the Civilians.

Perhaps it may not be improper, in this place, to observe, with what Tenderness *Our own Nation* has always treated the Persons of foreign Ambassadors; and to give an Instance or Two how

how we have behav'd to the Ministers of other Princes, in order to shew what Usage ours have a Right to expect Abroad; tho' it must be remark'd, that all our ancient Laws seem to be made rather with an Eye to our Regimen at Home, than to our Dealings with Strangers; and that the Civil Law, which is the chief Settler and Regulator of the Rights of Embassadors, is not, nor was originally any Part of our Constitution. The Story of *John Imperiali*, Envoy from the Republick of *Genoa*, is the most ancien that occurs to my Memory at present. This Gentleman residing here in the Reign of *Richard the Second*, had procured to himself some beneficial Monopoly of the Trade to *Italy*, which so irritated some of our *English* Merchants, that Two of them finding an Opportunity, provok'd him to a Quarrel, in which he was kill'd: The Parliament took this so heinously, that they unanimously declar'd the Fact High Treason, and the Assassins were executed accordingly; tho' by the Laws then in Force, it was no more than Homicide, for which they might have had the Benefit of their Clergy. This was no more than Justice, tho' it was a generous Satisfaction to that Republick, to shew her, that the Murderers of her Minister were as highly punished as the Murderers of our King could be.

It is a Pleasure to observe, that the Legislature have had but few such Occasions to exert their Love of Justice, and observance of the Laws of Nations, since one of the most remarkable is still fresh in the Memory of every Body; how, for an Insult offer'd to the Person of the *Muscovite* Embassador by a few rash Tradesmen, the Government not only expressed their Detestation

testation of it by a new Law, to prevent such Insults for the future, but was obliged to be at a considerable Expence, in a solemn Embassy to the late *Czar*, to make him some Atonement for the Insufficiency of our old Laws, to punish adequately the Offenders.

We have also lately shewn as memorable an Instance of our Compliance with the Law of Nations, in a Point in which our own Laws are particularly silent, as any People in the World ever did. A Neighbouring Prince had the Imprudence to send among us, as his Minister, one of our Fellow-Subjects, attainted of High Treason by Law, and one in whom it was Capital to be found in the *British* Dominions; yet such was our Moderation, tho' we were not upon the best Terms with his Master, as not to offer him any kind of personal Insult; but only to represent to his Friends, how improper a Minister he was, and make Overtures to have him recalled.

Thus have we always behaved to Foreigners, thus have we, where our own Laws were silent, or insufficient, given way to the Civil Law, or made new ones of our own. And does not this give us a Right to expect from all Foreigners a Compliance at least, with their own Laws, in Favour of whatever Minister his Majesty honours with his Commands?

Octob. 16. 1725.



Of



Of MODERN POETRY.

To &c.

S I R,

IT is more than a Conjecture, that all Nations who were the Inventors of their own Poetry, employ'd it first in the Praises, and to the Honour of the particular Deities they worshipp'd: Hence it grew, that when Verse was made use of upon meaner Subjects, the Gods were thought so interested in it, as never to be entirely neglected; so that if the whole Piece was not compos'd to their Glory, yet the Poets never failed in some Part of it, either by introducing them as Machines to carry on their Design, or by direct Exclamations or Digressions in their Praise, to set forth their Wisdom, Power, Justice, or some, or all their Attributes: Nay, in Process of Time, when Poetry got into more Vogue, it was thought an Affair of such Importance, that bold was the Man who durst venture to begin a poetical Performance, without formally addressing for Leave and Assistance some of those Deities, who were supposed to take the tuneful Art more immediately under their Protection.

From thence it is easily to be inferred, that such Nations as have received their Learning and Arts from others, have followed the Steps which their Masters trod, though very often the Propriety of Religion and Distinction of Country, were by such servile Compliances confound-

ed and broke thro'. For Example, the *Romans* borrowed their Learning, particularly their Poetry, from the Greeks, and thence it is that their Songs and Poems were filled with the Græcian Deities, *Apollo*, and the *Muses*, and *Minerva*; while the Gods of their own Country were most shamefully over-looked.

I would not be understood to mean here that the *Romans* did not afterwards worship those very Deities as well as the Greeks, but I speak upon a reasonable Conjecture, that the Orthodox Religion of the *Romans*, which was taught them by *Numa Pompilius*, was once at least as different from that of the Greeks as their Language; tho' in Time (and perhaps they ow'd it to this Practice) they became so generous as to receive the Gods of all whom they conquer'd into their Protection, and as their own Phrase was, *Civitate donarunt*, made them Freemen of their City.

But the most pregnant Proof of this absurd Practice, appears in the Poetry of all the European Nations, who, it seems, received their Politeness and Learning from those same *Romans*, and therefore have, in Defiance of their Creeds, introduced the whole Mob of Greek and Roman Deities into their metrical Compositions, as if fine Fancy and good Sense were inconsistent with the Religions they profess.

Some of the French Criticks, amongst whom I am sorry to find the great *Boileau*, not only justify, but recommend this Practice: Tho' for the Credit of our own Country be it said, we have almost given it up, and indeed nothing can be so contradictory to good Sense as to see a Christian Versifier, for fear of cracking a poetical

tical Precept, make a bold Breach directly through the first Commandment.

But I hear the Poets objecting; What shall we do for our Patrons? If we want a *Phœbus*, a *Mercury*, or a *Mars*, to compare them to; or for our Mistresses, if we want a *Venus* or a *Misserua* to be excell'd by them, a Troop of *Muses* or a Set of *Graces* to wait on them? we shall be in a fine Taking indeed. This is a hard Case. But I think it no Busines of mine to supply their Defect of Understanding, and so leave them to it; only I will observe that the Disgrace which Poetry lies under at present is in great Measure owing to those Piddlers in it, whose whole Stock of Science amounts to a few Shreds and Scraps purloin'd from *Ovid's Metamorphoses*.

I have computed (for I love to be exact) in reading over our modern Miscellanies, *Venus* mistaken for some Toast, or some Toast for *Venus*, three hundred, thirty, and seven Times precisely, and in those same excellent Store-houses of Erudition and Intelligence, I have detected one hundred and fifty nine Ladies, who not having the fear of Deggrel before their Eyes, have feloniously purloin'd *Cupid's* Quiver, spoil'd the use of his Bow, and discharged his Shafts from their own more dead-doing (optick) Nerves. These were pretty Fancies and elegant Conceits in the Antics who invented them, but sure now-a-days the Boys who write them ought to be remanded to their Accidence, and the Girls who admire them be much better employed at their Samplers. What *Farquhar* in the *Stratagem* says, with regard to Conversation, is a fine Reproof to such Poetlings: Mrs. *Sullen* says

The S P E C U L A T I S T.

says of Archer, that he took her Picture for Venus's; Dorinda says, that Aimwel took her for Venus; Psha, replies Mrs. Sullen, if my Lover had made me such a Compliment, I should have taken him for a Footman indeed.

These are but Trifles, says an Objector, What shall we do for Machines in Epicks, if you rob us of our Gods? Whom shall we invoke in the beginning of our Poems, if you strip us of the Muses? To this may be answered, Milton has shewn what a great Genius can do; and only such should make Attempts this Way. Mr. Dryden is of Opinion that the Christian System will furnish very good supernatural Agents and Machines very proper for Heroick Poëtry. Mr. Pope has struck out a pretty Discovery in the Rosycrucian Scheme, which he uses in the *Rape of the Lock*, but it's surprizing how the same Writer could stumble upon the School-boy Tale of Pan and Lodona in *Winsor Forrest*. Besides in light Poems, the Fairy Tales are a more amusing and palatable Superstition, than those of the Heathen Gods, better suited to our belief, and affording more Scope for Invention; for this Reason I am exceedingly surpriz'd that the beautiful Poem on *Kensington Gardens*, has not met with a more univeral and distinguish'd Applause.

Besides what has been said against these Ethnick Instruments of Machinery; it may be observed, that the antient Writers generally used them by Way of Allegory, which conveyed excellent Lessons to such Readers as tasted it, but that our Moderns have no Pretence to; they imitate the Absurdity, and lose Sight of the Beauty. In a few Instances it must be allowed,

but

but those are generally in the mock heroick Style, that some Moderns, particularly *Boileau*, have with great Propriety and equal Success personaliz'd Qualities, and at once made them act as Machines, and furnish out Allegories.

But to conclude: It is monstrous to observe what a Crowd of Absurdities this unwarrantable Licence has thrown into our modern Poetry: Our Saviour Christ and *Bacchus* being brought into Company together at a Banquet, is an old Jest among the Criticks. But I have seen Things every whit as ridiculous: I have seen the Virgin *Mary* attended by the *Graces*, and the Angel *Gabriel* sent of a Message to *Pluto*. But even where this prophane and unnatural Mixture of the Systems is avoided, does it not look very odd to see a Poet tell a long Story, which he is obliged by his Art to make as like Truth as may be, and which contains a Legend of the Exploits of heathen Deities, whom every body believes never to have existed? In fine, we live in an Age where Sense, good Sense, and Nothing but Sense, is required, and nothing else will be received; and we are never more in the Right than when we reject the *Pagan* Theology in all Kinds of Poetry, but the Burlesque, where it appears gracefully enough, because we are under no Temptations to believe it.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

Novem. 13, 1725.

W. SHARPSIGHT.

of

~~Speculations~~

Of the Reformation of the L A W.

To &c.

S I R,

ONE Day this Term my Curiosity carried me for Amusement to *Westminster-Hall*. The Decent Gravity of the Judges, and the Solennity of the Courts, struck me with a sort of reverential Awe, which the numberless, idle, busy, litigious, and dejected Faces I met, as I sauntered up and down, soon dissipated. It was easy to observe in every one's Countenance what Call he had thither; and the vast Variety of them gave my Mind for a little while an agreeable Employment. But I was thrown by what occur'd, after some time, into serious Reflections upon the present Condition of our *Law*, increased as it is to so prodigious a Bulk, and attended with such Circumstances as have made *That* a laborious and artful Science, which was really and originally no more than a *Duty*, and have erected into a Mystery, what ought to be known and observed by all Mankind.

Next to being good Men and good Christians, the Character most to be desired, is being good Subjects and good Neighbours; and therefore next to Religion and Morality, the thing most to be practis'd is Obedience to the Laws of

of that Community in which we live; but if those Laws happen to be veil'd by Obscurity, or envelop'd in Mystery, how is this Character attainable? Certainly, in this Case Subjects must become like the People under *Popeish Pastors*: For it is every whit as hard to obey what we don't understand, as to believe what we can't comprehend.

I know in this present Condition of the Laws, Those who are called Lawyers may with some Justice say—*We* don't wrap up the Law in this manner;—*We* unveil it for you;—*We* clear it of those Difficulties and Obscurities which you complain of.— But then, what a happy Condition are We in, when what is of most Importance to us in this Life, is in itself so perplext as to stand in need of nice and artful *Comments*; and that we must in Cases which concern our Lives and Inheritances, have recourse, not to the Law itself, but to the Dictates of an Interpreter, who is far from being infallible.

It is very true, that the Vices of Men have occasioned the Multiplication of Laws; and I will allow that this Multiplication might create a clashing. Mens Vices and Virtues are so hard to be divided, that the same Law which punished a Villany in one, might encourage it in another, if this Method of Construction were not allowed; which at the same time is the Parent of such Perplexities, as almost confound the Design of it. I think it is evident, that the general Drift and Bent of all human Laws is to secure the Weak, either in Mind or Body, from the open Force, or secret Stratagems, of the Strong and Subtle. This Method indeed arms us against the Assaults of the powerful open Antagonist,

gonist, but lays us intirely at the Mercy of the Cunning Man, who is by much the more dangerous Enemy.

What a miserable Condition is he in, who lives under Laws, where the Knavery or Folly of a Man he trusts, shall strip him of his Property; or his own Mistake pass Judgment upon his greatest Concern? where the Merits of a Cause are not so necessary to the Success of it, as the Management; where entring upon a Law Suite is like engaging in a Duel, in which, Skill in the Weapons disposes of the Victory, and not the Justice of the Quarrel?

Now the only Remedy for this is, to have the Laws as few, as coercive, and as certain as possible. Many Inhabitants and few Laws, are the great Happiness of a State. But when the Power of those Laws is dreadful, and the Certainty conspicuous, they are an Insurance for the Permanence of that Happiness.

That this has been the Opinion of the wisest Lawgivers, may be proved from innumerable Instances. *Moses*, *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, and *Numa*, in the Succinctness and Plainness of their several Laws, are sufficient Testimonies. And besides several Evidences which we find, that others of the Ancients thought a Multiplicity of Laws dangerous to the Community; We read of a famous Commonwealth, where it was a fundamental Rule, That whoever proposed a New Law, or the Amendment of an Old one, should come into the Assembly with a Rope about his Neck, prepared to suffer Death, if his Proposal was thought improper by the Majority of his Country. Add to this, the Care which all wise Nations ever took, to prune their own Laws,

and to pare away those Superfluities and Excrencies, which an ill Constitution and Length of Time might have given birth to.

The most illustrious Example of this kind, was given by the Emperor *Justinian* among the *Romans*. This wise Prince, perceiving that the *Imperial or Civil Law*, which was in his Time about Twelve Hundred Year old, had, during that Series of Years, swell'd to a most inordinate Bulk, notwithstanding the Attempts of *Theodosius*, and some of his Predecessors to cure it; considered, that restoring it to a proper Size would prove the greatest Glory of a good Monarch, assembled the most learned Lawyers of the Empire, and in Consultation with them brought about a Work, which will render his Name famous, while Laws and Letters remain. By rejecting the Obsolete and Unnecessary, and illustrating the Obscure, he fram'd a compleat System of Laws; and after adding some New, and inforcing more strongly the Old, reduced the *Roman Law*, which before was hardly contained in *Two Thousand Volumes*, to the Number of *Fifty*. A glorious Work, and fit to be imitated by every Prince, who would build his Fame upon Actions truly meritorious.

Nor has this Example wanted Imitators since; nor were some of our *English* Kings the least praise-worthy of them. That excellent Prince *Henry the Second*, when he came to the Crown, found such a Mixture and Confusion of Laws huddled together in a Heap, among his People, that it was difficult for them to distinguish Legal Right from Wrong. The different Customs of the different Nations of the *Saxons*, *Mercians*, and *Angles*, the Laws of the *Danes*, and

and Impositions of the *Normans*, were so oddly blended, that the Subjects wanted a certain Rule to walk by: But he went about it so vigorously, that he soon cleared the Law of its Rubbish, and set it in a flourishing Condition. Such Regulations as he made, and the whole Body of former Laws, were by his Command written in one Volume by the learned Judge *Glanville*; and are still extant, a Monument of his own Learning, and his Master's Wisdom.

So zealous were the *English* in those Days for the Certainty of their Laws, that by the time of *Henry the Third*, it was thought proper to collect them anew. Whether *Bracton*, who perform'd this Work, did it by the King's Command or no, I won't pretend to determine; tho' it is not improbable that he did, since in the Reign of *Edward the First*, the Son and immediate Successor of this King; *Britton* Bishop of *Hereford* published a Book, by the King's Order, containing the Substance of all the Laws then in Force and Use; which Book was, in Imitation of *Justinian's Institutes*, written in the King's Name, and continued for a long Time the Standard of the *English* Laws, as the Monarch who set it forth was for a great while reputed the wisest of the *English* Kings.

Ever since have our *Laws* been swelling; and no friendly Hand has attempted to regulate or contract them. 'Tis true, we have Books called *Abridgments*: but these are not of the *Laws*, but of the *Doubts* arising upon them; and even these have grown to an intolerable Number. But let us take a View of the bare *Statutes*, from *Magna Charta* down to this Reign; and we shall find our Constitution sick of a *Tympney* of Law.

Laws. My Lord Coke in his Time complained of the Bulk of the Statutes; but had he liv'd till now, he must have been astonish'd at it. And indeed it's a melancholly Thing to reflect, that what ought to live in every one's Memory, can hardly be purchased for less than twenty Pounds; nor understood for five hundred.

I submit to every impartial Person what I have said about the Necessity of amending the Law, into a plain and useful System. And I think I may say, that we have Reason to hope for it the more at this Time, when we consider that we have a Monarch now reigning, equal to Justinian in his constant Disposition towards his Subjects Happiness; and a Lord Chancellor in Abilities and Inclinations for his Country's Service, not inferior to that Emperor's Minister of Reformation, the renowned Trebonian.

I am Yours, &c.

PHILONOMOS.

November 13.

1725.



A



A DIALOGUE,

Between Julius Cæsar and Jack Shepherd:

CÆSAR.

HOW now, Wretch ! What Madness has inspired thee with the Thought of swelling into a Comparison with me ?

Shep. Look you, Sir, I have been as excellent in my Way, as you in yours ; perhaps more so : And, as we are now in a Place where Glory is our best Portion, I can see no Reason why an Equality in Merit should not be a Foundation for an Equality in Fame.

Cæs. And is it possible ? Gods ! what do I hear ? Are all my Battles compared to Street-Robberies ? All my Sieges to Burglaries ? And must all the Actions of my Life be tarnished by a vile Comparison with a Slave, whose highest Character is that of a Gaol-Breaker ?

Shep. Softly, good *Cæsar*. Is it more a Crime to pick a Lock, than unhinge a Constitution ? Are a Pair of Fetters more sacred than the Liberty of the People ? And is it more dishonourable to slip through the Hands of a Gaoler, than break thro' the Laws of one's Country ?

Cæs. Now, Friend, I have caught thee : Wast not thou made a publick Spectacle of Infamy for Breach of thy Country Laws ?

Shep. I was ; and 'tis there (if any where) I have an Advantage o'er thee : I only infringed the

the Laws, not overturned them. I did not grow too big a Villain for them to punish me, as you did, and therefore was punished in an extraordinary Manner; but, surely in fair Reasoning, 'tis the Crime, not the Punishment, that is scandalous.

Cæs. That I am ready to grant. But, pr'ythee, what are my Crimes?

Shep. O Lord, Sir, I want Memory to repeat them. Usurping a Tyranny, enslaving your Country, destroying the established Plan of Government, invading Foreigners whose Freedom you had no Right to disturb, and perplexing Citizens whose Liberties you were obliged to preserve. In a word, being seditious at home, and troublesome abroad, is the best Character you have to boast on.

Cæs. This is a little odd. But pray, Sir, had I no Virtues?

Shep. Very few. Some Accomplishments indeed you had, and so had I, or neither of us had been fit for our Business: Your Purpose was to obtain Power; mine to get Riches: We both took illegal Methods, and therefore some supplemental Qualities were necessary to our Undertakings; you was learned, wise, and valiant; I was sly, cunning, and dextrous.

Cæs. And will you then make no Difference between our Enterprizes?

Shep. Not until you shew me that the one was more warrantable than the other, or less noxious to Mankind; and whichever you prove to be so, I'll allow to be the most laudable.

Cæs. Very well. As yet you have only shewn that our Vices are equal: Now, pray, Sir, what are your Virtues?

The SPECULATOR.

Shep. Did I ever pretend to any? Sir, you mistake me, I only put in for Fame, to which Virtue is but an indifferent Title. Lord, Sir! if either you or I had had Virtues, we had been forgotten long since.

Cæs. Hey-day! And so you are content if I give up my Character for that of Villain, to be thought one too?

Shep. I never aspired to be greater than Cæsar.

Cæs. Presumptuous! And dost thou hope to be equal?

Shep. Why not? My Actions are as wonderful, and somewhat honester.

Cæs. Why dost not thou relate them then? For as yet I have heard nothing, but infamous Things of thy performing.

Shep. Cæsar, I hate boasting; but could I write, like thee, an Account of my Life, it would not be credited, but it would be free from the Censures that may be pass'd upon thine: Men would find nothing in it undertaken thro' Wantonness or Ambition. I did not ravage as you did, in the East for Fame, in the West for Supremacy: All my Actions were enterprized upon a justifiable score, the Maintenance of Life; and if Glory attended them, she came uninvited and unexpected.

Cæs. I perceive by your Discourse, that you are a Leveller, and not to be conversed with upon such Subjects. But you were pleased to affirm just now, that I had no Virtues; I tie you to that Assertion, and laying aside my Character of Monarch, will join Issue with you upon the Foot of personal Merit.

Shep.

The SPECULATOR.

Step. Why, now you talk Reason, and I shall hear you with Pleasure.

Cæs. What's your Opinion of my Courage?

Step. Why! That you had Courage is not to be disputed; but you must allow it to me also; and I think I have shewn it to a greater Degree than you did. I fancy, declaring War, alone, and unarm'd, against a whole potent Kingdom, is what you would not have ventured upon. Besides, Courage is a Quality so many Brutes have in common with us, that 'tis almost a Shame to boast on't. Add, that it has such a Dependance on our Constitution, that it is no more a Merit than Birth, Beauty, or any other accidental Ornament; and a Man is no more to be praised, or blamed, for having, or wanting Courage, than for having a fine Hand, or a distorted Face.

Cæs. What of my Humanity and Moderation?

Step. Trick and Artifice, like my own: Rancour and Cruelty woudl have undone you. Why! I never purloined any Thing that could be of no Use to me.

Cæs. What say you to my Wisdom and Learning?

Step. Your Learning I don't understand, but I hope you woudl not palm it upon me for a Virtue? And as for your Wisdom, I am ashamed to think that the World has been imposed on by it: I have contrived a better Plot for stealing a Gold Watch, than that by which you stole the Liberties of Rome: Nor was your Scheme for getting the Sword of Power into your Hands, by any means equal to mine for procuring one, whose only Worth was a Silver

The SPECULATOR.

Hilt. Oh, that I had been *Cæsar*, and you *Shepherd!* I should have made a glorious Emperor, and you but a sorry Thief.

Cæs. Come, good Words and few; I have but one Question to ask. What are your Thoughts of my Resolution? And do you think passing the *Rubicon*, or swimming from *Alexandria* to my Fleet, have historical Actions their Equals?

Shep. Hey-day! Did you ever hear of my two Escapes? and do you think the Man who had Resolution enough to attempt them, did not surpass you?

Cæs. They were Acts of Despair, not of Resolution.

Shep. I believe, Sir, you'll find them founded on the same Principle with yours; or if they vary, 'tis for the better. Such of your mad Pranks as you had no Occasion to play, were done for Glory; those which you were forced on, for Life. My Actions were all of the latter Sort, and therefore, as I hinted before, more meritorious than yours; for next to playing the Fool, the greatest Folly is doing it only with a View to be talk'd of.

Cæs. 'Tis somewhat hard that, tho' I have given up my publick Character, you will allow me no personal Merit in my private.

Shep. Sir, I have Reason. You and I have done great Actions in our several Ways, but the Ends for which we did them render them vile: There is no such Thing as personal Merit, independent of Society, nor can any Accomplishments deserve that Name, but in proportion to the Benefit which the Weal-Publick receives from them. Courage, Humanity, Moderation, Wis-

The SPECULATIST.

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Wisdom, Learning and Resolution, are fine Qualities, but it is the Use and Application which make them Virtues; and the only Reason for paying any Regard to them, is, that when Men are engaged for the Good of their Kind, such Qualities make them more able to procure it effectually; which Argument is reversed, when the Purpose is altered.

Cæs. I am almost of your Opinion. You reason well; and I wish, for the Peace of Mankind, the Rulers of the Earth had so just a Notion of my Character as you have.

December 4,
1725.



E 3 Of

Of the MANNERS of the PEOPLE.

To &c.

S F B,

THE Inclination I have to be serviceable to my Country persuades me, in my Decline of Life, to draw my Pen in its Behalf. I flatter myself, that I could read my Countrymen several Lectures, that might be of use, if I were indulged in the narrative Vanity of my Age; how far I shall be favoured that Way, must be left to you, Sir. Give me leave therefore to tell you my History and Character, that you may be able to judge whether or no I am qualified for your Correspondent.

The Beginning of my Life has nothing remarkable in it. I don't remember that my Birth was dignified with the Appearance of any new Star, or that my Mother dreamed any odd Dream at my Conception, or that I came into the World with any strange Marks or Excrescences about me, as was formerly usual with great Men. I was sent to School, and whipp'd till my fourteenth Year, as most other Lads are, and from thence to the University, where I was notic'd for reading much, and drinking little, as most other Lads are not: This lasted three Years, at the End of which I took a Whim of seeing the World, as Men call it, and went a tra-

travelling, in which I have spent my Life, from my Entrance into my eighteenth Year to the Completion of my fifty eighth, without ever once seeing my native Country; till now, I know not what to call that agreeable Folly of being willing to die at Home, has prevailed upon me to return, and here I am a most compleat Traveller. I desire you may not be startled at the Name of a Traveller, I have no Legends of Lies to publish of my Occurrences abroad, no Directions for such as intend to travel; my Design is to make my Peregrinations of use to such as stay at Home, and to shew that I have travelled with uncommon Success, that is to say, have acquired a Knowledge of my own Country.

I have been so long abroad that it will not be wondered at, that at my Return I had forgot every Thing of my Country, but the Language: The Manners, Customs, and Habits of the People, were to me as new and as strange as those of any foreign Nation I ever pass'd through, so that I immediately began to consider myself as no more than a Traveller here, and therefore sat down to read Books, went out to see Company, and did all in my Power to inform myself thoroughly about them, which I think I have done by this Time; and the Remarks I shall now, and hereafter make to you, are such as occurred to me while I was so employed.

I believe it will readily be granted, that all Nations are partially fond of their own Vices and Follies, and therefore disqualify'd to be Judges of themselves. The Remarks of sensible unprejudiced Foreigners must therefore be

thought the truest Characteristicks of all Countries; and if so, mine must have some Merit, since my long Absence has put me into the curious Condition of a Foreigner, while my Regard to my Country must wipe away the Imputation of Partiality or Malice.

The first Thing that shocked me after my Arrival in *Great Britain* was, that Rude Familiarity, which is the distinguishing Mark of the English Peasantry from that of most other Nations, that insolent Contempt of Superiors which reigns among the Clowns, Porters, and other mobbish Characters: Tho' it be a Proof and the Result of our Freedom, yet it is an Argument for those who call too extensive a Liberty the Parent of Barbarity: Sure, Courtesy and Freedom are by no Means incompatible! And is it not enough to satisfy any People of their Liberty, that their Lives, Properties, and Reputations are strictly guarded by the Laws, without introducing a Destruction of Subordination, and a Confusion of all Station and Character? Certainly, in the asserting and defending of these Rights and Liberties which we so much boast of, the People of Condition and Rank had always the greatest Share, and the greatest Merit, as they ventured both Lives and Fortunes, while the Mob had only Lives to lose; and is it not a Hardship in our Laws (if the Hardship lies really in them) that a Peasant, a Coachman, a Servant, a Porter, or any such mean Fellow, shall provoke and insult his Master or Employer with the most opprobrious and scandalous Language, with Impunity, while the Gentleman thus affronted, if he gives way to that Passion which the other is wishing to raise, and inadvertently or

or rashly strikes him, shall never escape (besides the Trouble and Vexation of a Law-suit) a large pecuniary Mulct, which goes to the insolent Fellow as a Reward for his Insolence. I would not here be understood to argue for subjecting the Lives or Limbs of these poor Wretches to the Resentment of every rash Man, who is, or fancies himself provoked; no, I am for trusting them in no Hands but those of the Law: But I think it would be highly proper to arm Justices of the Peace with a Power of inflicting an immediate corporal Punishment, upon such Delinquents of this nature, as are unable to answer the Damages which may be recovered in a Suit of Law commenced on account of such abusive Language; and, I believe such a Method might prevent much of the Mischiefs committed by the Rashness of People, whose Ease and Fulness of Fortune makes them impatient of contradictory or reproachful Words from Folks, whom, they imagine, Nature and Providence have placed, in every Respect, so much beneath them, and whom they madly sometimes suppose were made, like the Beasts of the Field, to be at their Disposal.

Should I draw any Arguments from the Courtesy, Affability, and submissive Civil ty of the Peasantry in neighbouring Nations, I might expect to be told, that their Want of Liberty broke their Spirits, and rendered them servilely courteous, and meanly fawning; and should I relate how severely the Insolence and Sauciness of such People to superior Characters are punished, I believe I should be answered, that it proceeds from the same Spirit of Tyranny which runs from the Monarch down to the meanest of his

his Subjects, who have any still beneath them. But, with Submission to better Opinions, I am inclined to think that our Ancestors, who curtailed the Prerogative of their Kings, and abridged the Power of the great Men, never intended to give up their own Rights and Privileges; nor could it be their Design, when they reduced the Encroachments of higher Characters within proper Limits, to leave their own unguarded, to be trampled on by Inferiors, and that way open a Gate to Levelling and Confusion. The Lawyers inform me, that of Old, and they say it is only abrogated by Disuse, the Punishment of a mean Person for striking or assaulting a Gentleman, was nothing less than the Loss of the Hand he struck with: This is much more severe than the French Punishment of the Galleys, yet was put in Practice about the Time of the Barons' Wars, the greatest and noblest Struggles that any Nation ever made for their Liberty. Yet now we think an Attack made upon the Master by the Servant, or upon the Servant by the Master, equally criminal, and the same Methods of Punishment, as well as the same Kind of Process, are used in both Cases. Must not a Man be very partial to his Country, or deeply interested in the Case, who prefers this Way of proceeding to that of another Nation, which condemns the Servant to the Galleys, and makes the Master atone by a pecuniary Mulct, according to the Circumstances of the Case?

I believe several well-meaning People would think our old English Law cruel, as well for the Punishment, as for the Distinction of Character, which they apprehend might put the Limbs of his

his Majesty's Subjects too often in the Power of Heralds and Genealogists: As to the First, I entirely agree with them, that the Punishment ought to be softened: As to the Last, I own I don't perceive that Danger. I think we are pretty well cured of that Folly which teaches us to put an imaginary Value upon any Set of People. Property is the Parent of Power: Riches first made Gentlemen, and the Want of it degrades them; this is demonstrable from the Nature of Gentility of Old, which was annexed to the Possession of Lands, the only Riches of former Ages. The Possession or Want of Riches, as they fairly imply Wisdom or Folly, would, I believe, be allowed the Test of this Character, and every Man would be justly entitled to Respect proportionable to the Interest which the Weal-publick had in him, that is, according to the Property he possessed; which, I think, it is easy to prove, was always the Way of judging, in every Country where the Monarch's Prerogative had not got the Ascendant over the Subjects Right.

But of this enough for the Present. If your Acceptance of this encourages me to proceed, I shall lay before the World several Observations of this Kind, gathered perhaps from those Things we most value ourselves upon, our Manners, Customs, and Religions; nay, our Constitution, which we, so much esteem, has not quite escaped me. But, as I intend no Offence, I hope I shall perform this without giving any.

I am, SIR,

Your Humble Servant,

JAN. 15. 1726. PEREGRINE RAMBLE.

*A NOVEL.*

To &c.

SIR,

HYPOCRISY is one of the vilest as well as one of the commonest Vices of Humanity; the fair Sex seems the most tainted with it, and it is not much to the Honour of human Nature, that the greatest Proficients in this ungenerous Frailty should be the most agreeable Part of our Species. Instead of bringing elaborate Arguments to prove this, give me leave to present the World with an Instance of the Truth of it, in a faithful Narrative of an Adventure which I am well assured happened lately at *Paris*, and which made so great a Noise there, as to give occasion to a Comedy written upon the Groundwork of this Story.

A Widow Lady, who was neither overstocked with Youth nor Beauty, but whose Estate could more than supply those Wants, and whose Family was considerable enough to make her proud, had, by Means of these Charms, drawn about her an Army of Lovers, who continually laid Siege to her Person, in hopes of reducing her to the Necessity of surrendering her Fortune. She put on the Appearance of Piety and Devotion, affected to be scrupulously nice in the most trifling Matters; Sanctity and Religion were her continual Topicks, her Confessor was her chief Minister, and she found out Scruples

ples of Conscience almost enough to turn his Brain, if he attended to them. In short, she repented of the Pleasures she had formerly received in the Marriage-Bed, and determined to atone for them by a most austere Chastity for the future: She gave Alms in abundance, comforted the Sick in Hospitals, and, as Mr. Pope expresses it,

*Visits to every Church she daily paid;
And march'd in every holy Masquerade.*

Upon these specious Appearances she founded so fair a Reputation, that, by the help of a little Flattery from her Favourites, the Priests and Friars, she was universally known by the Name of the *Holy Widow*; but lest her true Name should be necessary, through the Course of this Story, I take this Opportunity of informing my Readers, that she was called *Maria*.

Her Lovers were Men of Courage, not a whit dishearten'd by all this: Some of them, in order to be always at hand, pursued her from Church to Church, from Hospital to Hospital, and underwent for her sake, what they would never have done for their Souls, all the Fatigues of her Devotion and Charity; while others brib'd the Confessor to assure her, that her Soul might as well be saved in Matrimony as Widowhood; but all to little Purpose. There was only one of them that was wise enough to foresee the Success of their Wild-Goose-Chase, or honest enough to despise such sinister Means of carrying his Point, and therefore discontinued his Visits; his Name was *Lysander*: But our Widow had not an Admirer the less for his Absence; for just about this Time arrived in Town

Town *Sylvio*, a younger Brother of a genteel, but decayed Family: Miserably poor was *Sylvia*, but he had a well-made Person, a fine Face, some Wit, and a good Address.

Fortune threw him into the Neighbourhood of the Widow, where he had not been long, before he heard so much of her Estate, and her Piety, that he long'd to know more of her: He soon found out her Haunts, followed and observed her, and from thence made a shrewd Guess at her Constitution: He saw Vanity in her Devotions, and Ostentation in her Charity; those shock'd him not; but the Number of her Suitors, that puzzled him: Ordinary Methods he saw would not do; well then, extraordinary must be used: He knew, as I said, her Constitution, that she was more in love with Reputation than Virtue, and less afraid of Sin than Shame; from which he concluded, that if he could procure Access to her, and at the same Time baffle Suspicion, his Point was as good as gained.

In order to this, he left the Part of the Town she lived in, and retired to the most obscure Corner of it; and, by the Help of a little Money, soon found Means to procure a Licence to beg, with an Attestation of his being deaf and dumb from his Birth. Our new Beggar, thus equipped, knowing *Maria's* Haunts, though perfectly unknown to her, took Care to appear at all the Churches where there was any Likelihood of her coming: His good Presence, in a little time, attracted her Eyes, she read the Licence and Certificate, appeared concern'd at his Case, and gave him a bountiful Alms. *Sylvio* thank'd her with a Bow so graceful, that, turning

turning to her Maid surpriz'd, she cried, What Pity it is so likely a Fellow should be so unfortunate. *Sylvio* was pleased with his Success, and therefore constantly gave his Attendance at one Church or other, where he never failed to find her, and never found her in vain. He constantly drained her Purse, which he as generously distributed among the real Beggars, as soon as her Back was turned. *Lucy*, her Woman, one Day observed this, and reported it to the Widow, who was so struck with the Generosity of the Action, that she made it the Pretence for putting in Practice a Resolution she had before made in favour of *Sylvio*, which was to take him home to her House, cloath, feed him, and provide him an Apartment, out of pure Charity: However, she would neither do this nor any thing else, without consulting her Confessor: The good Man, charm'd with the Charity of the Widow, gave his Consent joyfully. *Sylvio*, though he counterfeited so well as to make it hard for them to communicate the Design to him, yet, when it was proper for him to understand, thankfully accepted the Favour, and was in effect brought home, new cloathed, well lodged, and the Widow made it her own Task to attend him.

Pleasure and Reputation, when they can be enjoy'd together, are the greatest Comforts in Life. These *Maria* had in view; *Sylvio's* Form gave her Hopes of one, and his Infirmitiess of the other. But *Lucy*, who was as wanton and hypocritical as her Mistress, got before-hand with her; being more amorous, and less nice, she sooner found Means to make herself understood by *Sylvio*; who, from an Opinion that she might

might be of use to him in his Design, admitt'd to her all the Happiness in his Power.

While Things went on thus, an Accident happen'd which gave the Widow's Wantonnes a Tincture of Love, and added to her Desire of his Person, an Esteem for the Merits of *Sylvio*. One of the briskest of her Admirers, but the least in her good Graces, who remember'd the old Rule of wooing a Widow, was resolved to put it in Practice; and accordingly took the Opportunity of being alone with her for making an attack upon her Chastity; she resisted and cry'd out, and did all that was in the Power of a poor weak Woman; but had nevertheless been deflower'd, if *Sylvio* (who wandered up and down the House like a tame Bird, or any other domestick Animal, and had Access every where, went in and came out as he pleased, and was known by all Visitors, for the Widow's Mute) had not bounc'd into the Room at the Instant when her Virtue was at the last. Gasp; he quickly snatch'd up a Sword he saw in the Room, and, by his stern Aspect and Posture, gave the Ravisher to know, it was proper to defend himself: He presently took the Hint, left the Widow, and made an Attack of a different nature upon her Champion, who soon disarmed and laid him at her Feet: Thus was the House cleared of one troublesome Rival.

The Widow's Friends and Visitants were soon acquainted with the Story, and the Address and Dexterity of *Sylvio* was the Widow's constant Theme; she affirmed it was marvellous, and the flattering Friars assured her, it was a Miracle wrought by God to reward her Charity to the Mute..

To

To be as concise as possible: The Widow ever after this burned for the Enjoyment of *Sylvio*, till her Woman, who was more learn'd than she, put her in the way of satisfying her Appetite: If she lov'd *Sylvio* before, now she doated on him; she thought of nothing but how to secure the Continuance of her Happiness, and began to entertain groundless Fears for the loss of it: For this Reason, she held frequent Conferences with *Lucy* how to keep the Mute for ever in her House, in spite of his Friends, if he should have any, or his own Inclinations, if they should prompt him to wander. These, and many other Discourses, were always in the Presence of *Sylvio*, who still behaved so properly that he gave no Suspicion.

Lucy, who was a cunning Baggage, and knew how to make her own Advantage of every thing, answered the Widow, that to oblige her, and secure her Happiness, she was willing to give up her own Hopes, and marry *Sylvio*. This *Maria* did not entirely approve of; but as she was in her Woman's Power, could not absolutely reject it: But the Question was put to the Mute by Bits of Drawings, as all their Love Questions were, which he very gallantly answered, to the Widow's Satisfaction. This, if possible, increased her good Liking towards him; and all Things went on very happily, till she found herself, by God's Blessing on their Endeavours, in a way of being shortly detected by a growing Belly. This occasioned several private Conferences (still in the Presence of *Sylvio*) between her and *Lucy*: Matters were strangely perplexed: *Sylvio* was offered as a Husband by *Lucy*, but refus'd with the utmost Abhorrence and Detestation:

station: In short, after several vain fruitless Projects concert'd, it was agreed to send to *Lysander*, and offer him that Happiness upon his own Terms, which he had for some time past neglected to pursue: So said, so done. Her Confessor was employ'd to break the Matter to *Lysander*, and assure him, that, in regard to his Probity, *Maria* had pitched upon him, among her Admirers, to be the happy Man. He, tho' absolutely void of Tenderness for her Person, yet had a great Esteem for her Estate, and not thinking it proper, when Fortune knocked at his Door, to enquire the Way she came, quickly consented; and a Day was appointed accordingly.

Sylvie was now in a distracted Condition. He saw all his Endeavours lost, his Hopes ready to vanish, and he himself unable to prevent them: But something must be done. He presently writ to his elder Brother a pressing Letter, assuring him, that his Rise or Ruin depended upon his being in Town on a Day, which was to be a Week before the Marriage: When he had done this, he went to *Lucy's* Apartment, and, taking her by the Hand, spoke to her: She, with surprize to hear him, swoon'd; which, when he had recover'd her from, and comforted her a little, he addressed her in this manner. "Don't be surpriz'd, my dear *Lucy*, "to hear me speak now; my All is at Stake, "and a longer Silence might lose it: Be in no "Fear; for what has passed between us, it "shall be as secret as if I was really dumb; "make use of this Knowledge to assist me in "my Design on your Mistress; assure her, that "if she marries me, she marries a Man that "can

" can speak, a Man of Honour, and a Gentleman: If you can succeed, as my Fortune will be made, so, I promise you, shall yours. Farewell, and use Dispatch."

Lucy went to her Mistress, and *Sylvio* posted himself so as to overhear them: *Maria* received the Proposal with the utmost Indignation; and, upon Assurance of *Sylvio's* having the Use of his Tongue, vow'd his Death, either by Poison or Assassination. *Lucy* urged the Marriage as a mild Revenge; but in vain: Her Answer was, " Shall the filthy World discover what were the Motives of my Charity to the Villain?

Sylvio knew enough from this, to think it advisable to provide for his own Safety, which he did by retiring to his own obscure Lodging, and there waiting his Brother's Arrival, who was exactly punctual. He acquainted him with the History, and sent him presently to *Lysander*; who, upon examining Circumstances, found Reason to believe that he was made a Dupe: But *Lucy*, who was brought to him, by her Testimony, put Matters beyond Doubt. He therefore came to an Interview with *Sylvio*; where it was agreed to divide the Widow's Fortune between them, two thirds and the Lady to *Sylvio*; and one third to *Lysander*; who, being of a revengeful Temper, could not forgive the Affront put upon him, but made it part of his Bargain to have Liberty of resenting it publickly, which was agreed to; and done in this manner.

On the Day appointed, *Lysander* and the Widow, with a number of their Friends and Relations, went to the Parish-Church as Bride and

Bridegroom, in order, as was thought, to be publickly married. *Sylvio* and his Brother paid their Attendance also among the Crowd: When the Couple stood before the Priest to have the Ceremony perform'd, *Lysander* suffered all, till this Question was asked, Wilt thou take *Maria* to Wife? &c. to which he answered aloud, "No. But perhaps this Gentleman may, (pointing to *Sylvio*.) I don't care for trespassing upon another's Ground; and he that sow'd the Corn shall reap the Harvest for me." Here he told the Audience the whole History, while the Widow stood in the utmost Confusion, which *Sylvio* took Advantage of, to speak to her. He pressed her to Marriage, that the Company might not be disappointed; and she, to make the best of a bad Market, struck up a Bargain. They were married, her Hypocrify blown up, and her Fortune divided according to the Agreement. *Lysander* had enough to live happily without her, and *Sylvio* to repair the Ruin of his Family with her. *Lucy* was sufficiently provided for soon after by *Sylvio*, who, I am told, lives happily and pleasantly with his Widow to this Day.

Thus, Sir, have I told you as succinctly as possibly, the History and Fall of this Piece of Hypocrify. I am satisfy'd that several Circumstances in it, were I inclined to play the Frenchman, and dwell upon them, might be wrought up to more Entertainment, and the Whole make an agreeable Novel: But I was tied down to the Limits of a Letter, which, I fear, in spite of my Caution, I have exceeded, and therefore beg Pardon for. I am, Sir,

Febr. 18,

1726.

Your Humble Servant, &c.

Of

Of DUELING.

I Could not avoid being moved, by several late melancholy Instances, to put together some Thoughts about the Practice of *Duelling*: though, after what so many good Authors have writ upon this Subject, I perhaps may be thought idle or impertinent in doing it. But as this is an Objection which will lie to almost all modern Essays, my Part of it is the easier to be borne: especially if we consider that Sentiments of Morality and Virtue may be of use, tho' they be not entirely new and untouched upon; and that it is some Merit, to revive in the Minds of Readers the just Notions which they had formerly entertained, and the proper Observations they had before made upon such Subjects.

To trace the Beginning of this pernicious Practice, is of no moment to the correcting it; tho' it is very probable that, contrary to the Opinion of several of the Moderns, it was in use among the *Greeks* and *Romans*. The Adventure of the *Horatii* and *Curiatii*, as *Livy* relates it, is among several others a notorious Instance of its being used in Cases of a *Publick* Nature by the *Romans*: And those learned Men, who are of Opinion that *Livy* stole the Adventure aforesaid from some Memoirs of two little Towns in *Greece*, seem to think it an early Practice among the People of that Country in the like Matters. That there are several pub-

lick Instances of it in Greek and Roman Story, is needless to prove; and that from publick and authoriz'd Cases, it might have crept into private Revenge; tho' it be not clear (for no Authors give Accounts of it, nor Satyrits exclaim against it) yet it is at least probable. I say this, because, tho' the *Duel* in publick Cases has been of old mix'd with our *Constitution*, and been a Part of our *Laws*, yet in private Affairs it has not been complained of, nor considered as a Grievance till lately. No Books were written against it; nor is there any mention in our Histories of Gentlemen who fell in private Quarrels, till within this *Hundred and Fifty Years*; tho' it is more than probable that the Example of great Men, who did it by the Authority of the *Laws*, set others upon the same Practice in Cases which the *Laws* took no Cognizance of.

I own, that the Ecclesiastical *Laws* are full of *Censures* and *Interdictions* against this Crime and the Committers of it. But the severest, and those which level most directly at *private Cases*, are *Modern*; Those of a more antient Date are rather against the Authority and Practice of the *Constable* and *Marshal's Court*; a Court, in which Points of Honour were amongst other Things often decided, and most Causes were tried by *Combat*. For in *Writs of Right* and *Appeals*, (the only Cases in which *Battle* is now allow'd) the Champions and Combatants had of old a Form of Prayer, and a particular *Church* for their Use before they fought, as Mr. *Selden* testifies; which could not have been so, if such kinds of *Duelists* fell under those *Excommunications* which the *Canons* are full of.

Mr. Selden, the best Advocate for this abominable Practice, thinks it justifiable, for the same Reasons, that a publick War between two great Princes is; for, says he, they being both equal to each other, and inferior to nothing upon Earth, there is no Judge but God qualified for trying their Cause of Quarrel; and entring upon a War is commencing the Suit before him: Thus, continues he, in Cases of Right, where want of Evidence so perplexes the Cause, that the Judges are incapable of deciding it, an Appeal to God, the Supreme Judge, is allow'd by way of Battle. For the same Reasons he thinks a private Duel lawful, because it is to decide a Point which generally wants a Judge in this World. The Lye, for Example, given, is by Custom a great Injury, yet such a one as the Laws of our Country give no Satisfaction for; therefore the Party injured has a Right to call to Heaven in the manner mentioned, for the Revenge he can't meet with upon Earth. So idly does this Great Man talk, without considering that Heaven, as well as Earth, is engaged by God's Word to refuse Revenge to the Man who pursues it. Fighting a Duel, according to his Notion, is making a Request to the Supreme Power, which he has expressly refused, and has threaten'd Vengeance on the Man who solicits for: But besides, how does it appear that such an Affront is an Injury, for which, by Right, Atonement should be made? Why, Custom, supported by the Suffrages of Idiots and Madmen, makes it so; and Custom is a better Authority than Law, Reason or Religion. Not to insist upon the last, because weaker Arguments will suffice, Mr. Selden himself would allow that

no Man should pretend to more Wisdom than the Laws of his Country contained, and yet these Laws have always look'd on unoffended by such trifling Matters; and so far from thinking they deserved Death, as our Heroes would insinuate, have considered them as meriting no Punishment at all. Nor can it be objected, as is said in favour of some new Penal Laws, that these Crimes are of a new Nature, or that they were overlook'd by the Founders of Communities; for these little Irregularities are as old as Society, and must have been observed by the first that brought Men together and ever since, but were always thought too trifling to be regarded.

Other Arguments in favour of this Custom are, that it maintains Civility and Good-Manners among Men; that the Peace it procures is well worth the Lives that are sacrificed to it; and that the Mischiefs of it generally fall among turbulent People, while Men of good Sense and quiet Disposition enjoy the Advantages of it, and the like. Now to speak *Politically*, I will own, that the few Lives that are lost by this Vice are to the Publick of no very great Value: And for the latter part of the Argument, I only wish it were always true. But is it not true, that some part of the Community perhaps irretrievably suffers whenever those Accidents happen? Is not a Father, Husband, Son, Friend or Patron, often immaturely lost to those, to whom their Lives were the greatest Blessings? Have we not, in the last Reign, seen a *Minister of State* fall, and, perhaps, the Busines of the Nation stop'd or perplex'd by this Practice? Does not every one know, within his own Acquaintance, Men of very valuable Qualities and Talents, whom

whom the Fear of Shame does, or may engage in this Practice? And, lastly, does it not often happen, that Men of the meekest gentlest Tempers are forced upon this Vice in their own Defence; and (to shew, that Heaven engages not in it) are not the Wrong-doers often the Victorious, while the Innocent are the Victims to this Idol Honour, for this imaginary Peace? Of the Truth of this, we have a deplorable Instance in a late melancholly Accident, which was the chief Occasion of these Thoughts.

I know, that we were formerly led into an extravagant Fondness for this Practice, by the Example of a neighbouring Nation, whom one of their mad Kings, by dropping an idle Expression about *Two hundred Years ago*, set into such Confusion, that it was reckon'd the greatest Glory of the greatest Prince, perhaps, that ever was, to rectify it. What amazes me, is, that we don't follow their Steps in the Cure as well as the Disease. I am told the Objection to it is, that if *Duelling* was as entirely suppress'd in *England* as it is in *France*, it is fear'd the Insolence and Haughtiness of every Man would rise in proportion to his Power and Quality; which is a risque the middling Men, who make up the Majority of our Legislature, don't care to run. Now what more easy than a Remedy for this? The Example of *France* still instructs us. The Erection of a Court to examine into and punish the little Petulancies which are the Occasion of so much Mischief, and a Method of making it reputable to apply, would go farther in preserving Peace and Good-Manners, as well as the Lives of several useful and valuable Men, than the Toleration of this barbarous, illegal and

and sinful Custom. Besides, the Advantage of adjusting who are entitled, and to what kind of Satisfaction, wou'd be the means of securing Gentlemen from the Dangers they are now in, of exposing their Lives against the meanest of Scoundrels; Fellows whose Honesty is liable to Suspicion, and whose Honour only consists in fighting, right or wrong. It is an odd Reflection, that this kind of Honour should keep Company with Persons, whom all other sorts have abandoned; and it is still stranger, that Gentlemen of Honesty and Parts should practise That as a Virtue, which is claimed in common with them, nay and attainable too, by the vilest, idlest, and silliest Parts of Mankind.

The Author of the *Conscious Lovers*, to whose excellent Writings against this Vice, I believe, we owe at present the Loss of some Part of its Reputation, and our former Fondness for it, considered himself as doing a bold Thing; and I remember, his Acquaintance were dubious of the Success of it; when he made *Bevil* deliberate and expostulate with his Friend, before he accepted his Challenge, although he does not refuse it: nor is he so much shock'd at the Duel, as a Crime before Heaven, but as a Breach of Friendship. I own, I think, he ought to have refused it flatly, and broke off his Friendship with the Man that offered him such a Provocation to such an exorbitant Crime. I believe, had the *Author* done so, he would not have met with the less Applause; for who, in his Senses, can but applaud a Man, for absolutely refusing what *Religion*, *Law*, *Reason*, and *good Sense*, must have condemn'd him for consenting to?

Febr. 26. 1726.

SPECULATIVE DISCOURSES

Of TOES.

To &c.

SIR,

THE learned Montaigne has written an Essay upon Thumbs, and the ingenious Author of the *Tale of a Tub*, a Dissertation upon *Noses*? Besides, I have seen a whole Treatise in French, which had for its Subject *Eyes*.: Now I hope all these worthy Precedents will justify me in giving the World a Discourse upon *Toes*; and I believe my Candour will be applauded, when I shall do Justice to an injured Member, which has been so long buried in Obscurity; and shew fairly to Mankind a Part of the Body, which has hitherto fallen under no Inspection, but that of a Corn-Cutter.

I am afraid the Learned will conjecture, from my Choice of a Subject, that I go frequently a-foot, and in that Way have received such Services from the Members aforesaid, as were sufficient to bribe me to be their Panegyrist: I say, I am afraid of this, because if they should get such a Concoit in their Heads, my Character of Disinterested will not stand upon altogether so good a Bottom as before: However, my Comfort is, that I know how to make the best of it, if it should happen so; since what the Consciences may term Flattery and Corruption, I hope the Good-natur'd will grace with the gentler Names of Complaisance and Gratitude.

Be

Be that as it will, I shall proceed undaunted in this Apology for such deserving Objects, in whose Cause, and for whose sake, I dare venture to bid defiance to their two greatest Enemies, Corns and the Gout.

It must be allow'd that the Form of my Clients is not altogether the most engaging; but when we consider how frail an Ornament Beauty is, and how many other Merits they have to atone for the want of that transient Quality, it will hardly be reckoned a Defect: They are not the only Things more proper to be felt than seen; and the Wisest of Mankind seems of this Opinion, when he says to the Fairest amongst Women, *Comely are thy Feet with Shoes, O Prince's Daughter.*

However they may stand with respect to Beauty, their Claim to Wit is most unquestionable: There is a sort of Wit they are the most famous for, and that is, Answers to Lampoons, defamatory Advertisements, and scurrilous Pamphlets, which I have seen better done by them than any thing their Rivals the Brains could furnish. Their Arguments are so close, and their Turns so smart, that they generally leave their Antagonists unable to answer them, and, like the *Ratio ultima Regum*, admit of no Reply. While I am upon this Point, I must do my Clients the justice to restore them to their Right in a sort of proverbial Sarcasm, which is generally bestowed on the most excellent and useful Society, the Dancing-Masters of *London* and *Westminster*: It is said of those Gentlemen that their Wit lies in their Heels: This is a Mistake, and be it known unto the World that those light-footed Animals have, in common

mon with their *Bettters*, a great deal of *Wit* in their *Toes*; and that whatever may be said to the Advantage of a light *Heel* in a *Quadrupede*, yet a nimble *Toe* is the better Qualification in a *Dancing-Master*.

The Valour of our *Heroes* is most undoubted: That huffing *Hector Honour*, that makes the *Virgin coy*, the *Coward quarrelsome*, the *Gamerster* pay his *Debts*, and daily shews a thousand Instances of his absolute Dominion over Mankind, at the Approach of my Clients flies from their Presence, and dies away at their Touch; let them but knock at the *Door* of his *Residence*, and he immediately quits the *Dwelling*, and would no more return to it again, than a *Badger* to his *Hole* after a *Fox* had befouled it. Something like this the ingenious *Butler* has hinted, when talking of an Attack made by our *Champions* upon some dreadful *Antagonist*, he says it was just in the *Breech*,

— *Where Honour's lodg'd,*
As wise Philosophers have judg'd;
Because a Kick in that Part more
Hurts Honour, than deep Wounds before.

I know it is given out, to the Disparagement of these *Worthy Members*, that they are deficient in Point of Nobility; that their Blood is base; and that their common Ancestor was no better than a *Footman*. These are Opinions which it will lie upon me to undeceive the World in; and therefore I assure Mankind, upon the Word and Integrity of a *Panegyrist*, that they are singularly and literally false, except in the last Article, which, while we confess to be true of our *Progenitor*, we hope our own *Merits* atone for; but

but notwithstanding this, we insist upon it, that our Family, though always kept under, is more ancient than some that rival us, and that Fingers and Thumbs, tho' they have risen since to greater Honours, such as wearing Rings and other Ornaments of Gold and Silver, yet are originally of a younger House, as by the Help of some *Welsh* Genealogists, or *Irish* Antiquary, we hope shortly to be able to prove.

Yet some Branches of this Family have not entirely gone without the Rewards due to their Merits: The Papal Toes have had more Honours paid to them than all the fair Hands in the World; but as my Clients are most sincerely Protestant, they don't listen with any great Pleasure to the idolatrous Worship practised in Honour of their Popish Relations: It is owing to the same Zeal for the Christian Establishment, that they don't boast much of the Honours paid to their Family by the two Emperors *Valerian* and *Bajazet*, who every Morning and Evening, for a considerable Time, bow'd their Imperial Bodies, and submitted their Necks to the Tread of their Conqueror's Toe; but this, as I was saying, they don't glory in, because *Cosroes* and *Tamerlane* were Pagans and Idolaters.

To conclude; this Part of the Body is so excellent and useful, that I can't help thinking it the greatest Affront imaginable to tread upon the Toe, and the rather because I am advised that it is no Assault in Law, and I think in Honour we are most obliged to perform and make good those Things which the Law gives least Sanction to: But, however, this Partiality in our Laws to so useful a Member, I can't help con-

considering as a Defect in our excellent Constitution, which I hope the Lawyers will soon provide for by giving it a Liberty of returning the Affront, and making a Kick on the Breech as trivial a Crime as treading upon a Toe.

I hope I have done Justice to these useful Members, and the rather because I find it given out by my Enemies that I had no Skill in Panegyrick, which is like to become a very useful and profitable Science in this Age. The Fondness for it always increasing proportionably as the Right to it fails; but when I enter upon it, it becomes high time to drop the Critick and the Satyrift, for which Reason I have here brought my Design to an immature Conclusion, and will take the Advantage of my Toes to walk off, with an Assurance to the World, that this is the last Time they shall hear of their Humble Servant,

WILL. SHARPSIGHT.

*Febr. 26,
1726.*



Of



Of LAWYERS.

LOOKING over a late remarkable Trial, I was surprized to find a strange Notion advanced, and much insisted on by several Gentlemen of Knowledge and Probity, as well as by the Person accused ; That the Impunity of others is, not only an Excuse, but a Justification for any Man, who has the Misfortune to commit the same Crime ; That a sleeping Law ought not to be rous'd to the Detriment of any who considered it as defunct : And, in short, that because Justice sometimes slumbers, we ought to take that Opportunity of knocking her in the Head.

Nay, more : It was strenuously urg'd, that where a Law is mute as to the Penalty, it cannot be construed to forbid the Crime ; for that is the Meaning of those who would argue, that because a Punishment is not settled, none ought to be inflicted. Virtue, they say, is its own Reward ; and, at this rate, Vice will soon become its own Punishment. This is putting modern Justice upon a foot with modern Satyr, and using them both like some wild Beasts that are brought hither from foreign Parts to divert us, whose Teeth are knock'd out, lest our Mirth should be interrupted with Mischief : And, indeed, breaking through a Precept because it only enjoins, not threatens, is paring off the Fangs of the Law, because it neglects to exercise them.

I am

I am not for adding Weight to the Misfortunes of any Man, nor, I hope, Am enough to insult a bed-rid and helpless Lion, because I may. I pity the great Man who is the Occasion of these Thoughts, and believe that in this Case (and his fine Parts kept him from many Mistakes of the Kind) his Judgment mis-led his Conscience, not that they acted in Opposition, which is the only true Definition of what Men call Dishonesty and Knavery. He is a remarkable Instance that the best Understanding and finest Qualifications, are not always Guards sufficient upon the Frailty of human Nature, nor able of themselves to conduct us safely through the Vicissitudes of this whimsical Being.

All Constitutions must either expressly or implicitly be vested with a Power of punishing Trespassers upon their Authority; and, where no certain Mulet is laid down, a discretionary one must be understood: Thus it is in petty Misdemeanours, where, though several Kinds of them are directed by several Laws to certain Punishments, yet there are a much greater Number of them which, though forbidden by Law, might meet with Impunity, if the Judges were not armed with a discretionary Power to punish them according to their Natures. Thus, in most Suits at Law, a certain Thing is demanded, and a certain Thing recovered; as, in Actions of Debt, Detinue, Trover, Covenant, &c. but in an Action on the Case, the Plaintiff may demand what he will, but shall recover only what his Loss and Damages amount to. Now, would it not be very absurd to argue, that because the Law directs nothing certain to be recovered in this Action, that therefore nothing

at all ought to be recovered? Numberless Arguments might be drawn from our own Laws to shew the Falsity of such Reasoning, but that we are supply'd from the sacred Decalogue with an unanswerable Instance in Favour of our Opinion: It is remarkable, that through the whole ten Commandments, as Moses received them from God, there is nothing mentioned of Punishment on the Breakers of them, though in one Article a Reward is offered to induce the Observance of it; and another concludes with a Threat that the Lord will not consider the Sinner in this Point, though it may seem the least important of the rest, as free from Guilt. Yet, when these Laws were infring'd, Moses was in no Doubt of the Crimes being punishable, but exerted his Authority, and shew'd the future Judges how it was to be done.

But I forgot that I am impugning an Opinion sufficiently overthrown by the Arguments of Men much more learned and eloquent than myself; and that I have been all this while wandering from my Purpose, which was only to observe from these Notions how little strict Truth is the Aim of a Pleader at the Bar, and examine how far such a Behaviour is justifiable in Conscience.

If I mistake not, the Gentlemen of that Honourable Profession are sworn at their commencing Practisers, to advise in no Case against Conscience, and to defend no Cause but that of Truth: But this I believe is considered as Matter of meer Form only, or how should it come to pass, that the greatest Reputation is to be drawn from well maintaining the worst and weakest Side of a Cause? It is hardly reckon'd any

any Merit for a Lawyer to succeed in a Case where Truth and Justice is plainly of his Party; but to contrive Intricacies and Perplexities, to be versed in Trick and Chicane, is the sure Road to Fame and Fortune.

I know it will be said, they are both sworn and obliged, in Conscience, to do all in their Power for their Clients; but this must not be made to clash with the other Part of their Oaths; they must be jointed, and thus understood: They are to take none but such Clients as have just Causes, and them they are to serve by all the honest Means they can devise: They are not, as I apprehend, to earn their Fee; for they are presumed to be above receiving it: They ought not, as Butler says,

*Put the same Mark on the Hip
Bust of their sound and rotten Sheep.*

They ought, in the Cause of Truth and Justice to display their Talents, and endeavour to make their Skill useful in the Support of them, as it was first intended; but if they are ever compelled by worldly Interests, too powerful, or too alluring to be withstood, to appear on the worst Side of an Argument, they ought not to impinge their Guilt, by exerting their Force, but give up the Pursuit of Vanity and Fame, for the calmer Joys of a quiet Conscience.

Open thy Mouth for the Dumb, and plead the Cause of the Poor and Noddy, is the Advice of an inspired Writer, and seems directly adapted to these Gentlemen; yet, if considered in the same Manner as the last mentioned Article of their Oaths is, might occasion very bad Consequences:

If the poor Man be in the wrong, he is no more to be assisted than the rich; but if the rich Man commits Faults, it is almost a Crime to excuse him: A good Lawyer is an excellent Character, but a good Man is a better; and if they appear incompatible, I need not direct which ought to be plucked off, and thrown aside. Bishop Burnet, in his Life of Sir Matthew Hale, tells us, That the Father of that great Man was strictly of this Opinion: That he forsook the Practice of the Law, because he could not reconcile to his Conscience several Parts of it, which few modern Lawyers boggle at; particularly their Manner of glossing and giving a Colour to Actions, as they term it, which he apprehended was no better, nor other, than asserting flat Fals-hoods; he therefore forsook it, and retired to live upon a small Estate. Great Example! that must not hope for Followers: He preferred an upright Heart to worldly Reputation, and an enlarged Mind to a swelling Fortune.

But, lest I should be thought to treat with Dislike or Disesteem a Profession which is in itself so honourable, which has given Rise to so many good Families among us, and Ancestors to so many of our Nobility, let my Opinion be heard, that it has produced more learned, upright, wise, and loyal Men, than are to be reckoned in any other Faculty or Science. To say nothing of other Countries, our own has produced its *Mores*, its *Bacons*, its *Hales*, and its *Kings*: And to conclude this Essay, let me recite from the Bishop before quoted, a Story of a Lawyer, which, to my thinking, has something as great and noble in it as any that is told of either *Greek* or *Roman*: That Lawyer was our Country-

Countryman, the famous Serjeant *Glanville*, who being but the second Son of a Man of Fortune, was by his Father (provoked by the Disobedience and Debaucheries of an elder Brother) left in Possession of a plentiful Estate. The Loss of his Hopes so mortified the Brother, who never imagined that his Father's Severity would have gone so far, that he wanted Spirit to pursue his former Courses, and in a little Time grew so reserved and reformed, that he became the Wonder of all his Friends and Acquaintance: The Younger, observing this, took occasion to invite him and some Relations to Dinner; where, to their great Surprize, in the last Course was served up a cover'd Dish, and placed exactly before him: His Wonder did not cease, when the Lawyer ordered it to be uncover'd, and it appeared full of Deeds, Charters, and other Writings, which he thus explained: "These, Sir, " are the Papers relating to my Father's Fortune, which he disposed of from you on account of your Behaviour; the present Change of it, had he been still alive, would have altered his Mind, and I think myself obliged to act as he would: They are yours, Sir, and all they relate to.

March 5. 1726.



Of INGRATITUDE.

TH E R E is no Word in Language so much used, and, at the same time, so little understood, as the Term *Ingratitude*. The Hatefulness of this Crime, and its Singularity in having no Advocates, as most others, upon some Occasions, and at some Seasons, have had, make its Name the most odious Reproach; and therefore the most frequently thrown upon such Persons as we hate or despise: And indeed the Villainy of it is so detestable, that, I confess, I think better of human Nature, than to suppose Mankind capable of falling into it, as often as our little Piques or Jars persuade us that our Neighbours are tainted with it. *Ingratitudo non amittit diuersum*, which, imitated in English by a modern Poet, is;

*He that's ungrateful has no Guilt but one;
All other Crimes may pass for Virtues in him.*

As in Proportion to the Greatness of the Transgression we are accused of, we ought, in Reason, to be allow'd the better Opportunities of making our Defence; so I hope the few following Thoughts will be look'd on by your Readers with a more than ordinary Indulgence.

It often happens that the Appearances of Ingratitude serve to pass Judgment against the Person accused; though, as I have hinted, the greater the Crime is, the stronger the Proofs ought

dought to be: I own it were well, if Appearances could be preserved in this nice Point; in which, as Cæsar said of his Wife, a Man ought not even to be suspected: But so it happens, that it is almost impossible to pass through Life, without having received Favours or Civilities, for which the Givers are apt to expect better Returns, than either they are worth, consider'd in themselves, or, perhaps, in the Circumstances which attend them: For Example, a Man that has been poor, without being base, has often been relieved by the Vanity, &c, to give it a milder Term, the Good-Nature of another, who was in no Respect his Superior, but the Circumstances of Fortunes: These, I think, are the Kind of Men who are the most frequently charged with this Crime, when they get above the Necessity of wahting Benefactors. Now, if we examine scrutinously into such Cases, we shall not find, in one of ten, an Instance of real Ingratitude. A poor Man, as I said, has been relieved: but such is the Insolence which attends Wealth, perhaps in a Manner which made that Relief a greater Distress, an assumed Superiority while bestowing, a Publication of the Benefit bestow'd, or a subsequent Upbraiding, justly destroy all Pretences to Gratitude: Besides, it often happens that a Man's not behaving in the same submissive or dejected Manner, when he no longer wants Favours, which another's Penitance obliged him to while he did, is reckon'd the highest Act of Ingratitude: Most absurd! If nothing but the Want of Money sets a Man beneath his pretended Friend, in all fair Reasoning, the Possession of it must restore him to his former Character; yet such is the Vanity

of some Benefactors, and such their Fondness for this Kind of Adulation, that an Endeavour to stand in no need of their Civilities (though such an Endeavour interferes not with the Benefactor's Interest, which to be sure would alter the Case) becomes with them a Breach of that Gratitude which they think their Due: So that the Case of the obliged Man is generally thus; He is necessitated, either to receive their Favours upon their own Terms, and continue to depend upon them, perhaps to be slighted or neglected one Day, to hear the Voice of the World upbraid him, or, by grasping at some Hopes of his own, to lose their Benefactions, and his Character of Just and Honest: Hard Case! that because in my Thirst an insolent Man has administer'd to me a Cup in which were mix'd Vinegar and Gall, I must consider him as the Preserver of my Life, or forfeit something dearer to me than that Life. What has been here said is only relative to Acts of Friendship between Equals, (if the Difference of Fortune will suffer that to be a proper Term;) as to Favours conferr'd upon Persons unknown, publick Objects, and indigent Inferiors, they are entitled to no Gratitude, because they must be presum'd done for no Body's sake in this World, and because our Religion promises a Reward for them in another.

Were I to define Ingratitude, I would say it was the Neglect or Omission of returning friendly Offices to deserving Men, equal, or rather superior to those we had received; to which I would add, that these Offices, like Praise, were only due where they were not expected. It is a common Mistake, that the first Duty of Life

is Gratitude ; there are several others prior to it, Religion, Loyalty, Love of our Country, Morality, and Honour : These are all so superior to it, that wherever any of them meet Gratitude, the latter must yield the Way ; and whoever lays Obligations upon another, with an Intent to make him do any Thing repugnant to these Virtues, ought, like all other Purchasers, to consider if the Mind had not a prior Incumbrance upon it, which might destroy his Pretensions. 'Tis upon this Principle I consider *Brutus* as free from the Scandal of Ingratitude, when he stabb'd *Cæsar*, who had been his Benefactor : He ow'd to his Country what he perform'd ; and he had been a Villain, if the Soothings, or the Bribes of a Tyrant, could have bought out the Omission of his Duty. For the same Reasons I think the Story of *Pylades* and *Orestes* an ill Moral : The latter had perpetrated the most horrible Villany in Nature, for which the Gods had fix'd a Curse upon him, yet his Friend took his Part, and became accessary to the Crime, by the Succour and Comfort which he ministred to the Committor of it : Sure if such a Friendship be laudable, the strict League and inviolable Attachment between *Blewit* and his Companions ought not to be blamed : Yet such Confederacies are monstrous Enormities, notwithstanding the plausible Terms of Truth, Gratitude, and Friendship, with which they are often adorned. No private Virtue ought to clash with the publick Good or Interest of Society ; whenever it does so, it ceases to be a Virtue, nay, it becomes a Vice ; for the Tendency it had to promoting the publick Welfare was originally the Reason
why

why this or that Action was honour'd with the Name of this or that Virtue; and, properly speaking, when it inverts its Purpose, it ought to lose its Name. If the common Good ought not to be thwarted, much less ought the revealed Will of Heaven, against which *Pylades* appears in the Fable a great Sinner; nor is the Warrant of Heaven to *Orestes*, for doing that horrid Act, any Argument in favour of his Friend, at least in our Times. We can never suppose that a supreme Being, all-good and all-just, should command an Action, and punish the Performance of it; so that what I said already must be true, that it is a bad Moral, or else its Theology will make it no Moral at all, nor of any Use to us. Upon the Whole, 'tis much of a Piece with the Gallantry of *Theocles*, who accompanied his Friend to Hell; an Act of heroick Gratitude, which I think a good Christian ought not to be encouraged to.

Before we accuse any Person of Ingratitude, we ought to examine nicely into the Circumstances of the Story; and after all, it is Odds but something escapes us, which, if known, would alter the Case entirely: Thus *Marius* appears ungrateful to *Metellus*, who lent him his Hand to lift him up to the highest Dignities: But if the Truth could be shewn, I believe we should find that *Marius*'s not calling for that Hand when he had no longer Occasion for it, or his attempting to climb higher than it could assist him, was his first Act of Ingratitude, which the other resented in such a Manner, as to deserve all the rest.

The greatest Act of Ingratitude we are capable of, is the Breach of a Trust reposed in us;

us ; for as Flattery sometimes overpays Favours, which may seem to demand Gratitude, so here it becomes a Favour, which has a Title to it. The strongest Adulation is, to convince another by Actions that you have a good Opinion of him, and the strongest of those Actions are Trusts of which the Breach would make you a Loser: Therefore, when a Woman of Sense and Modesty can, in spite of Custom and Education, think so well of a Man as to trust him with her Honour, whatever the Conditions were, it is the highest Piece of Villany and Ingratitude to break them : Yet so very idle do we think in most Matters, that a Transgression of this Nature is very consistent with our Notions of Honour and Virtue, while the Man who looks awry upon another who has lent him a Sum of Money, or help'd him to a Place, passes for the most ungrateful Scoundrel breathing.

March 12, 1726.



Of the REFORMATION of the L A W.

To &c.

S I R,

In a former Letter I sent you some Thoughts concerning the Contraction and Amendment of the Law. I will now go on a little farther upon the same Subject.

A Law-Suit may well be called, *Pugna Civilis*: and, as *Bratton* says, *Sicut Actores armantur Actionibus & quasi gladiis accinguntur, ita e contra rei muniantur Exceptionibus & defendantur quasi Clypeis.* Which is as much as to say, that both Parties are armed with proper Weapons for the Combat: The *Plaintiff* with *Actions* and *Declarations*, keen cutting Swords; and the *Defendant*, with *Quirks*, *Cavils*, and *Evasions*, as so many impenetrable Bucklers. It would be ridiculous to pursue this Metaphor as far as we might, and ring all the Changes upon it which the Wantonness of Wit could devise: But is it not full as ridiculous to hear grave Men cry out, that this Science of good *Pleading* is the most difficult, profitable, and honourable Branch; and others, that it is the very *Heart-string* of the Law; especially, when we know, that it consists in warding off, and throwing on, those pitiable *Quirks* and *Evasions*; or, in other Words, that it is the Mystery of playing the Weapons well. But lest any

any Reader should not readily comprehend what Male-practice I am pointing at, let this *Instance* serve to explain it; and this, the mildest of a Thousand which are to be met with in old Books of *Law*. A Man was sued as *Executor*, for a Debt due by the Person whose Will he was to execute: He answered as *Executor*, and after a Course of regular Proceedings, was cast, and Judgment given, that he should pay the Money: Which Judgment was afterwards reversed, because a sage Plodder found out, after a careful Examination, that the *Plaintiff's Lawyers*, through inadvertency, did not assert in the *Declaration*, That the *Testator* was dead. This single Trifle (tho' from the *Defendant's* answering as *Executor*, and all the rest of the Proceedings, his Death ought to be taken for granted) was reckoned an excellent Objection, and strong enough to overturn a just and rightful Judgment. Thus by one impertinent Piece of Nicety, was a Suit of some Years standing, and a great Expence of Money, all subverted, and render'd fruitless, and a just Cause set again to begin: which, by such Subtilties, might perhaps be staved off, till the Debt to be recovered, became less than the Charge of recovering it.

This Example is sufficient to shew the Necessities of Pleading. And what makes such Things more grievous is, that in some Cases, such petty Flaws shall not only overturn the *Cause*, but destroy the *Right*, so as that the *Party* foiled shall never commence that Suit again: And so indeed it was originally in all Cases, till several kind interposing *Statutes* took away the Grievances as they appeared, and from Time to Time, crushed to Pieces those Limbs of Subtlety; so that

that now we only wait for the *Coup de Grace*, to break entirely the *Heart-string* (as they call it) of profound Science.

To enhance the Mischief of such Matters; not only your Lawyer's Ignorance or Carelessness shall hurt you, but even his Clerk's. The Negligence of a Transcriber in omitting, perhaps, an insignificant Word, or his Blunder in mis-spelling it, shall occasion the most expensive Delays. What a Bustle was there in Layer's Case, about a Vowel in his Name? What Arguments brought on both Sides, for *e* against *o*, and what for *e* against *e*? Whether *Christopheris*, or *Christopherus*? And how little did that interfere with, or concern the Crime he was accused of? 'Tis such Trifling, that makes the Law and its Professors a Jeer, to those who think of them only as a Set of Men, whose whole Study it is to find out such insignificant Stuff to wrangle about. Thus will the Smirchers talk. But the Client's Case is far worse; he must complain that he wants Justice; he can't come at her; she is guarded from him by an Army of Disputants; intrenched behind the strong Bulwarks and impregnable Fortifications of Subtilties and perplexities. For the total want of Justice is but little worse than the want of a free and easy Access to her: as the want of an Infallible Guide in Matters of Faith, is much the same Grievance with the Ignorance of that Guide. The Romonists pretend to have such a one; yet the Condition of a poor Creature in that Communion, is but little help'd by it, since by their Controversies about it they have made it so difficult where to find it.

The Plea for these Practices is, that they are the ancient and known Laws of the Kingdom, which have been religiously observed by our Ancestors, and handed down to us from a Length of Amts. And this leads me naturally to consider of the Nature and Extent of Laws; and to observe, how a scrupulous Adhesion to the Letter, without regarding the Purpose of them, has, in some Instances, made our Constitution warp from its original Bias.

Every Law that is *perpetual*, ought to have its Signification so examined, that it may serve indifferently for all Times and Seasons; or else it will be in Danger of working that Mischief in one Age, which it was made to prevent in another. Thus, for Example, these Practices were probably at first set on Foot to prevent vexations and frivolous Suits, and to protect Innocence and thwart Oppression; yet now their Purpose is inverted. And thus that glorious Privilege of *Englishmen*, to be try'd by their Peers, came into the Constitution, when the Smallness of Property occasioned a greater Equality among Men. It continued till that Property, by being enhanced in some Hands, was naturally envied by others; and then, as well to protect Merit against Envy, as to procure adequate Judgment against Crimes, it was thought proper to distinguish who should be judged capable of being such Tryers; and the Mark of Distinction among the Commons was a Competency of Property: This necessary Portion of Property was adjudged to be a Freehold of the Value of Forty Shillings yearly. How great an Estate that was, we may gather from Sir William Dugdale, who relates, that about

bout that Time the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas had but Ten Marks *per Annum* for his Salary. By this we may be assur'd, that the Design of the Legislature was for ever to have Juries of Substance and Figure, tho' it soon happen'd otherwise: For when Trade augmented Wealth, *Forty Shillings* a Year became so inconsiderable a Freehold, that by the Laziness and Pride of Men of ample Fortunes, who thought serving their Country, and preserving the Privileges of their Posterity, was a Drudgery below them; the whole Decision of *Life* and *Property* fell for a great while into the Hands of Men, whose Education disabled them from judging rightly, and whose want of Substance made their Integrity more liable to Corruption. Nor is the Matter mended as it stands at present: But upon the whole, if the Design of our *Ancestors* in that Law had been pursued, and not the *Letter*, the Business of a Juror would be reputable, their Persons held in Esteem, and I believe less Corruption practised among them; for then, no Man worth less than Five Hundred Pounds *per Annum* would, in any of the King's Courts, be capable of that high Office.

Another Case in which the Subject suffers, is the strict adhering to that Old Rule concerning the Sitting of the King's Courts. When *Superstition* was very rank among us, the Year was so overgrown with *Holidays* and *Fast-Days*, that hardly above two Months in the whole Year could be allow'd to worldly Matters, and those were pick'd out with Care, and happen'd to stand together in a little Order, and made what we now call the Four Terms. By which Means

Means the Courts of Justice are shut above *seven Months* in the Year ; and the Pettifogging Attorneys, and vexatious Suitors, know how to make this turn to Account ; a very little Management being necessary to keep from Trial a Cause that won't bear hearing, till one of the Parties is so impoverished, that he must give up perhaps his Right for want of Wealth to prosecute it. How this can be cured, I must leave to higher Understandings : I have only attempted to awake others (I hope not too freely) to think, if possible, of some Remedy to the *Delay of Justice* ; a Misfortune so great, that the fine-judging Shakespear makes *Hamlet* reckon it up among those insupportable Calamities which might tempt a sensible Man to throw off Life ; and to help (every one in his Station) to bring out Courts of *Law* to the nearest Resemblance an earthly Judicature is capable of, to *That* above ; of which the same admirable Poet says,

*There is no shuffling ; There the Action lies
In its true Nature-----*

I am, S I R, &c.

March 12. 1726.

PHILONOMOS.



H

Of

~~MEMOIRS OF A COIN-HUNTER~~

Of STREET-ROBBERS.

To &c.

SIR,

THE Frequency of Street-Robberies of late Years, and more especially this Winter, seems naturally to lead us into an Enquiry, how they may be suppressed or prevented; and nothing appears so far so promising a Method as the Alteration of our Practice relating to such Felonies.

Men of these destructive Designs seem to have more and greater Temptations to pursue them in Great Britain, than they now have, or in ancient Times had, in any Nation whose History I am acquainted with. The Chance of passing undiscover'd, (which Robbers indeed in all Countries have in common with ours;) the long Delays which generally intervene between the taking and trying of *Felons*, and which often slacken the Zeal of the Prosecutor to such a Degree that a Criminal escapes; the Difficulty of convicting him, and the Hazard of his getting free by some *Law-Chicane*, if he be an experienc'd or a wealthy Thief; the Privilege of Transportation, which as 'tis too often managed, is only a Twelve-Month's Voyage; the Expectation of a Pardon or Reprieve, if he has either Friends or Interest; and, lastly, when all other Hopes fail, the riotous Pleasures of a Goal, and the disorderly debauch'd Preparation for Death,

Death, which, to Men of wicked and deprav'd Appetites, strips it of all the Terrors it should wear, when it is a Punishment: These, I say, appear to me the principal Reasons of the Number of such Offenders in these Kingdoms; and the Largeness of this populous City is the Occasion of their Confluence hither: so that no City in *Europe*, in proportion to its Magnitude, has an equal Number of Street-Robberies and Violences committed in it, except such as by their Government and Regulation are not near so well provided against them.

I believe it to be a pretty difficult Matter for the Laws to do more than it already done towards facilitating the Discovery and Apprehension of Thieves and Robbers. The Rewards and Pardons so frequently allowed by Statutes, and offer'd by Proclamations, seem to be the utmost Efforts of human Policy in this Point; which, since Felons so often find Means to elude, I think may well be made an Argument for giving them harder Treatment in other Matters.

But the Delays of Prosecution are by no means to be over-look'd. Amongst which, This Unhappiness may be consider'd as none of the least, That a Person accused of any Crime may, in some Places, lie Four or Five Months in Goal before he is called to an Account; much too long a Time for an Innocent to continue imprison'd, or for a Criminal to go without his due Punishment. Add to this, the Hazard of his Escaping during this Time; or, if he should not, his learning so many Tricks and Tergiversations among the Goal-Birds, as may enable him to slip through the Law, and baffle his Prosecutors.

secutors. Beside's the Leagth of Time, (which is often sufficient to tire the Patience of Men whose Desire of Justice is not very ardent) the Expence which attends some Prosecutions, deters People from doing their Country that Justice which is incumbent upon them, but which the Lowness of their Circumstances is very often an Excuse for neglecting. In *Perſia* and most of the Eastern Countries, which we reckon barbarous, their speedy Execution of Justice in these Cases ought to exempt them from that Character. No Delay is there used but what is absolutely necessary. Historians reckon the same Practice among the Virtues of our *Saxon* Ancestors; and for ought that I can perceive, there is no reaſon to believe but the *Romans* of old were equally expeditious: And to this Day, in Countries where the Civil Law is used, though some Delays have crept into their Proceedings, more than we can presume were originally intended; yet no such Complaint can be made as we of this Country have too much Reason to make. I am strongly of Opinion, that a Reformation in this single Point would more contribute to lessen the Number of Rogues and Rogueries, than a Bundle of new Laws inflicting new Penalties, in the old way of proceeding.

The Difficulty of convicting Felons, and the Danger of their escaping by Law-Chicanes, comes next to be considered. And here it is proper to observe again the Hardship of putting a private Man to a great Expence, for bringing about a Piece of National Justice. And if it be objected, that making it cheap would be a Temptation to vexatious Men, to perplex and worry innocent Persons; nothing, I say, would be

be more equitable, than allowing the Party acquitted his Costs and Damages against the Accuser; which is at present refused upon the poor Pretence, that the Suit is in the Name of the King, and the Prosecutor no Party to it. By stopping up the Avenues of Chicanery, I don't mean to exclude the Person accused from a fair Trial by his Country; which I think the best Institution in the World: But I am for allowing him no Pleas in Abatement *before*, no quashing of Indictments *after*, Conviction; but according as his Case appears to Twelve honest Men, let him be condemned or acquitted as the Law directs, without any Assistance from mere Errors in Matter or Form, or any Defects in the Proceedings but the mere want of Proofs.

Transportation seems another great Encouragement to *Felony*, and very little effective of the Purpose it was intended for. Charitably speaking, it is most distressful to have great Numbers put to Death for trifling Faults; and politically speaking, it is a Loss to a Nation to deprive itself of so many Hands which might be well employ'd for the Advantage of it: And for both these Reasons small Felons are sent to our Plantations Abroad, and the next Year work their Passage Home; which, tho' it be Death by the Law, yet puts several of the above-mentioned Chances on their side again; not to mention that it is Ten to One before they are taken, but they do more Mischief than their forfeit Life is an Atonement for. To say nothing of the Cruelty of incumbering our honest Countrymen Abroad with such a Pack of Vagabonds and Villains; the Use they might be turned to at Home ought to put a Stop to this Method. The Gallies in

France and *Spain* are a much greater Conveniency; and the publick Work-houses in *Holland*, where venial Sinners are made useful Subjects, set a good Lesson to a People who would thrive by Manufactures. If I mistake not, the *Aerarium* of ancient *Rome* was a Prison of this nature; where refractory Slaves, and Criminals of mean Condition, were put to continual Drudgery, and those Lives made profitable to the Publick by Restraint, which if enlarged might endanger its Safety.

Nor can I omit to observe, that the Hopes some Men conceive of their Interest to procure Pardons, is not only a Temptation to commit Crimes, but a Reason to defer their Repentance after Condemnation. In the *United Provinces*, the Power of pardoning or reprieving after Sentence is lodged only in the *States-General*, who can only be applied to when they sit; which is the reason that few Criminals have Opportunity of making Application, and fewer still receive Pardons. I have heard it affirmed, that it is owing to this Strictness in executing the Laws, that for many Years past not more than three Persons yearly have suffered Death, one Year with another, in the great and populous City of *Amsterdam*.

The Manner of preparing Criminals for Death amongst Us, calls loudly for a Reformation. It were to be wish'd that our Goals were in the Hands of the Crown, or such other Persons as might putt in Deputies, who should not by the Price of their Places be forced upon illegal Methods of getting Money. In *Holland*, the Prisons are so well inspested, that no Riot or Drunkenness can enter into them, each Criminal has

has a separate Cell, is suffer'd to see no body from abroad, nor interrupted by the Wickedness of Fellow-Prisoners. Nor can the greatest Wealth procure him any Immunities; no Manoy will purchase him better Food or Drink than the Goal-Allowance, nor protect him from the Goal-Discipline. Thus Punishment appears terrible, and may work its Purpose. Quite otherwise is it here. A Prison is a Place fitter to *make* a Rogue, than *reform* him: Bots and Chains are used as Bugbears to extort Money from those who are supposed to have it; while such as pay readily are indulged in the greatest Freedom and *Excesses*, be their Crimes of what Nature soever. And the Prisoner is left so open to Access, that Many late Instances (and one a few Days ago) have shewn Us the Abuse made of this *Liberty*, and the great Hazard to the *Publick* from it. Then after Sentence, a long Time is often allowed for *Repairs* to the Convict: which is usually employ'd in soliciting Reprieves or Pardons; contriving Escapes; or spending among their Companions that Money, for the unlawful procuring of which their Lives are now forfeit. In all *European Countries*, except These, no such Time is thought necessary. And I am clearly of Opinion, that nothing will so effectually free us from Rogues, as such a speedy Justice, that a Thief may be taken, tried, and hang'd, in a few Days. I wish with all my heart, that a *Medium* could be found between the Danger of innocent Mens suffering thro' too hasty an Execution; and a guilty Wretch's escaping thro' too long a Delay of the Execution of a just Sentence.

I am Yours,

March 19th 1726.

PHILONOMOS.

H 4

Of



Of INSOLVENT DEBTORS.

To &c.

SIR,

THE Bill now depending for preventing frivolous and vexatious Arrests, is so natural a Piece of Justice, and so restorative of our ancient Constitution, that I hope I shall be indulged in spending a few Thoughts upon the Subject of it.

It is the Opinion of very learned Antiquaries that the Infancy of our *Constitution* knew no such Proceedings, as *Arrests* in Civil Affairs; that the Imprisonment and Detention of a Man's Body, was in the Power of none but the King, except in Matters Criminal, when the Party aggrieved sued in his own Right; that all the Process in use was a Summons to the Defendant, upon which, if he appeared not, a Distress upon his Goods was ordered; that if he withdrew himself from the Law for a certain Length of Time, or upon Appearance it was found that the Plaintiff was right in his Complaint, Satisfaction was awarded out of the Defendant's Goods and Chattels; nor was it till lately, that the *Body* was made liable to Detention, even in Execution. And this seems very probable, if we consider the strict Laws of the *Saxons* relating to their Centennaries and Decennaries; by which the People were kept in such Order, that it was impossible for any Man to commit

more

more of any Civil Trespass upon his Neighbour, than his own Share of Property would make Satisfaction for. Add to this, that all the old Actions that are in use to this Day for the Recovery of Lands, lay no Restraint upon the Body of the Defendants, tho' they were originally Complaints of the greatest Wrongs which Subjects could suffer, that is, of being strip'd of the dearest and most valuable Property they had.

In After-Times, when Wealth and Fraud increased, it became necessary to punish the latter; and the Execution against the Body was thought the properst Method to deal with Men, who had either secreted their Effects, or wrong'd their Fellow-Subjects, without any. This was occasioned principally by Suits for Debt; which, however little known among the *Saxons*, multiplied so fast upon the Rise of Trade, that this was thought the only Way to secure Men's Property. This was soon followed by a more severe and unjust Practice. For when poor People found that the Consequence of their appearing to answer, was Imprisonment; they neglected and avoided any Appearance at all: to remedy which, it became lawful to take and imprison them, in order to compel them to answer. And this Practice, notwithstanding all our boasted Liberty, is in use to this Day. Our Ancestors seem to have acted very whimsically in this Affair. They spent their Blood and Treasure to secure themselves and their Posterity from the Encroachments of Prerogative: yet took no Care against private Malice! The King is tied down by Laws, from detaining the meanest of us in Prison,

son, without some Proofs of our Crimes; and yet our Fellow-Subjects are indulged in taking away our Liberty, upon Presumption (for it is no more till Proof appears on Trial) that we have borrowed Money.

Tho' much might be said against the Use of the *Copies ad Respondendum*, in general; yet since the Law wills it, and that some Men imagine Credit is improved by it, let us only consider it in frivolous and vexatious Matters. Some Time ago, the Judges of the King's Courts were so well satisfied of the Iniquity of imprisoning a poor Man, upon Surmise that he owed a small Debt; that they made an Order against holding the Defendant to Special Bail, in any Case where the Sum sued for did not amount to Ten Pounds. This was putting a stop to all frivolous Arrests in their Courts: but did not cure the Mischiefs. The ingenious Practitioners soon found, that it was only sending them to Inferior Courts; which have ever since thrived prodigiously. There are several of these little Judicatures about this great Metropolis, which exercise a Power, (I know not how acquired) of arresting for the most insignificant Trifles. By virtue of these Courts it happens, that a Debt of a Shilling; a cross Word spoken; and very often the oppressive Spirit of a spiteful Neighbour, without any Cause, shall throw a poor Man into Goal; where he shall lie friendless and unknowing what to do, till by the Management of an Attorney, Judgment goes against him; Execution fastens him there; he starves: and the Publick loses the Use of perhaps an honest Man; while the Creditor receives no Satisfaction, but what the malignant Pleasure of Revenge bestows.

The

The Romans, tho' I think very barbarous in their Treatment of poor Debtors, yet give us the Hint of a good Method. No Liberty was lost, till the Cause came to a hearing before the *Praetor*; and then, upon full Proof of the Debt, the Defendant had Thirty Days allowed him to pay it; which if he omitted, or neglected to do, he was by the *Praetor* aforesaid delivered over to his Creditor, to be his Servant till he had worked out his Debt. So far was, I think, equitable enough: But if he happened to have many Creditors, he was thrown into Prison for Threescore Days; then brought, on Three successive Market-Days, before the *Praetor*, and his Debts proclaimed; and on the last, if no Body redeemed him, or compounded with his Creditors, he was publickly sold as a Slave, for as much as could be got, to any Purchaser; or if the Creditors liked not the Price he would sell for, they might put him to Death: And in that Case it was customary for each of them to cut away a Cedlap of his Flesh, by way of Satisfaction for their several Demands. I think, if we except this last Article, our Barbarity is nothing inferior. The publick showing and proclaiming the Prisoner's Debts might have so good an Effect upon the Spectator's Charity, or the Creditor's Shame, as to save a poor Creature's Life: While our Practice sets him as far from Pity, as from the Power of making Satisfaction; it being not known to a tenth Part of the Town, that a poor Wretch, for being unable to pay a trifling Sum, is put to the most cruel of all Deaths, Famine. Those Things are so huddled up in the dark, that a malignant Genius may commit many such Murders; and yet

yet escape the proper Detestation which all honest charitable Men ought to hold him in: Whereas in *Old Rome* the Prosecutors were obliged to appear so publickly and so frequently in such Proceedings, that half the City had an Opportunity of branding them with their proper Characters, and saying as they passed,

Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto.

But it is a Pleasure to find that the Parliament are upon stopping such Mischiefs for the future, by a Clause in the Bill now depending, for the Maintenance of poor Prisoners for Debt. This is exactly conformable to the ancient Constitution: For there is a Writ to be found in *Fitzherbert's Book of the Nature of Writs*, suing a Maintenance for a Prisoner, against the Person at whose Suit he was confined. Tho' I never remember to have heard of such a Writ's having been brought within these hundred Years, for Reasons obvious enough; yet I am glad to know that the Justice of *England* had not originally more Cruelty mix'd with it, than that of neighbouring Nations; where the Loss of Liberty is accounted Atonement enough to the Creditor, without leaving it in his Choice to famish his Debtor, if he happens to be friendless.

Before I conclude, I must obviate one Objection, which was hinted before, and to which we will leave its full Weight in Matters of Consequence; which is, that this Law may be obstructive of private Credit; that no Body will trust poor People with Necessaries, if they be disabled from suing them maliciously, and then obliged to maintain them when they have got their

their Revenge. This, I hope, does not concern any Credit, that is worth preserving. It may shock the Idler's and the Drunkard's Credit: but such as give Marks of their Honesty, must of Necessity be trusted with Necessaries. Accounts for *Gin* and *Strong Beer* make up the greatest Part of the Pleadings of our Humble Courts about Town; and what Mischief can it be, to stop the Credit of People, whom Credit is a Detriment to? As to the Fear of maintaining Debtors; I own, I am so much an Admirer of the *Roman* Wisdom, that I hope the Parliament will take care that no Body shall lye idle in Goal, whose Hands, if employed, might either maintain himself, or help to pay his Debts. I am,

SIR, &c.

April 2.
1726.

PHILONOMOS.



Of

Of DISTRIBUTIVE-JUSTICE.

To Ex.

SIR,

NULLI vendemus, nulli negabimus Justitiam, aut Rectum, are the Words of an English Monarch in that famous Charter, which has been for some Hundreds of Years considered as the Pledge and Security of our Rights and Liberty. They express a Promise from One of our former Kings, which has ever since been constantly confirmed, and sworn to, by all his Successors, at their Entrance upon the Government; That Right or Justice shall neither be sold or denied to any of their Subjects. It is very observable, that They who first spoke this Language, esteem'd selling and denying Justice as equally criminal in the Judge, and equally detrimental to the Suitor; and I am pleased to find that their Successors continue of that Opinion, and are determined to transmit it as inviolate to their Posterity, as they receiv'd it from their Ancestors.

If the base Selling of Justice be culpable, what must their Guilt be, who heighten it with Fraud, who, when they have received the Purchase-Money, refuse to perform the Bargain, or do it in a manner much more incommodious than the Buyer expected or agreed for? Certainly this Guilt must be very great; yet great as it is, we have been Witnesses to the Commission of this Crime; which our vigilant Legislators, as soon as

as observed, are now about to prevent for the future. The *Masters* in Chancery have for some time past been *Criminal* in this way: Their turning to their own Use and Advantage the *Suitors* Money lodged in their Hands, contrary to the Design of their Office, was properly receiving Rewards for their Part in the Administration of Justice. Some may think there is no more harm in this, than in the Fees which the Counsellors take in Causes, if it be known and allowed, and the Money secured. But the *bazarding* this Money for their own greater Gain, and their Contrivances and Delays to keep this Money long in their Hands, in Prejudice to the said *Suitors*, was a *most Fraud*, supposing the former to be justifiable. The Case stood thus: Two Persons dispute the Right to a certain Sum of Money; to prevent its being embezzled by Either till their Title appears, the *Master* has it lodg'd with him; who, by Management and Industry, finds means to keep it from Both, till he either loses it entirely, or makes an Estate from the Profits, which, according to all Equity, ought to belong to the true Proprietor of it. This does not seem so equal a Distribution as the Lawyer makes in that fine Fable of Boileau's between the two Travellers; for we have often seen both the contesting Parties go off without even the Shells of their Oyster.

The Court of Chancery, compared to the rest of the King's Courts, is a new one; not but the Office of Chancellor is very ancient, tho' the *Judicial* Power was not originally so extensive as at present. It was in its Infancy looked upon as an irregular and arbitrary Court, set up for the Destruction of the Common Law, and the Rights
of

of the People, and for advancing the King's *Prerogative*. In this the Subjects were confirmed, when they saw generally the first Favourite of the Monarch sit alone as *Judge*; and found their old Manner of trying Causes by a *Jury* entirely laid aside: But they were afterwards made easy by the general Equity and Justice, that were used in the Determinations of this Court. Yet we find so lately as in *Henry the Eighth's Reign*, the Matter not perfectly settled; a Crime strongly urged and insisted upon in the Articles against *Cardinal Wolsey*, being the Power he assumed of granting Injunctions to the Courts of *Common Law*. And indeed, this Affair was never fully determined, till the Contention between the Lord *Egerton*, Chancellor, and Sir *Edward Coke*, Chief Justice, in the Reign of King *James the First*; in which the *Latter* was obliged to submit, and all Things were set upon the Foot they now stand on. How happy is it for the People of this Kingdom, that these Instances of Corruption did not appear earlier in this Court? Had it so happened, we have been generally so hasty as to argue *ab abuso ad usum*; so perhaps, in the Fury of our Zeal, the *Chancery* had fallen as well as the *Star-Chamber*: But, thank Heaven, it is but of late such Trusts were reposed in the *Masters*; and later still, that they ventured to break them.

I believe bringing the litigated Money into *Chancery* began formerly upon a Notion, which I find Sir *Edward Coke*, in his *Fourth Institute*, strongly inculcates, That this Court not being a *Court of Record*, had no Power over the *Estates* of Men, but was confined to a Dominion over their *Bodies*; and therefore before the Right was deter-

determined, lest the Decree should prove ineffectual, the Party in Possession of the Fortune contested, was obliged to lodge it in the Court, as Security that he would abide by the *Lord Chancellor's Order*. This I only offer as a *Conjecture*; but am sure, that ever since the Fear of any Person's secreting the Money he was unjustly in Possession of, has been the Motive in some Cases; and the Pretence in others, of ordering such Money into Court; by these Means it generally has happen'd, that the Widow, the Orphan, and People whose Misfortune and Wrongs make them the same Objects of our Compassion, are those whose Subsistence became thus lodged; and instead of being left in the Hands of Persons, who, had they been cast, must have paid for the Interest and Use of their Money, was removed into the Hands of others who are under no such Obligations, and who are better able to stave off Those whose Right it was, as long as the Possession was an Advantage to themselves. To say nothing of Persons, who, upon the litigious Claims of others, are obliged in this Manner to deposite their own *Property*; Is there any Thing more deplorable than to see miserable People, who, after they have overcome *Him* they called an *Enemy*, are now undone by the Delays, and perhaps by the total irretrievable Failure of *One* whom they depended on as their *Friend* and *Guardian*; who, like the bad Debtor in *Ecclesiasticus*, when he should repay, will prolong the Time: While the poor Suitor is like the *Lender*, there described, who, if he prevail, he shall hardly receive the Half; and be will count as if he had found it.

How strange is the Condition of our Existence? No Commodity, no Convenience of Life in *Society*, but what brings its Hardships and Mischiefs along with it! This Institution, which at first appeared the best that human Ingenuity could form, has at length become destructive of its own Purpose. But 'tis with Pleasure I observe, that the Wisdom of the *Legislature* is providing a Cure for this Corruption, in which every private Man will certainly acquiesce with the highest Satisfaction. I heartily congratulate my Country upon it; nor do I doubt but such Methods will be provided, that we may not at any Time hereafter, have Occasion to complain with *Solomon*, *Behold the Tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no Comforter: And on the Side of their Oppressors there was Power; but they had no Comforter.*

I am, SIR, &c.

April 9. 1726.

PHILONOMOS.



Of

Of Essayists.

WE Essayists are apt to beat the Imagination, in search of strange and exotick Subjects, to write upon, for which we are often at a Loss; while a Disquisition into our own Works, which are capable of affording us Matter so ample, and so well suited to the Taste of our Readers, seems to be entirely overlook'd or neglected by us; like the Eye, which, while it views and observes all other Objects, is incapable of discerning itself; or like the human Mind, which enters into, and examines the Depth of all other Sciences, yet seems to consider nothing less than its own Motions.

Most other Kinds of Writing have, I think, been the Objects of Criticism, and Rules and Orders have been laid down for the Writers of them to observe; but, in this Species, no body is confin'd: The only Rule that I know, and what is the best practised by the scribbling Brotherhood, is not only to go without, but to go against all Order and Method whatsoever. *Montaigne*, if I mistake not, was the Inventor of it; and he is, in all its Beauties and Faults, the best Pattern to examine it by: He has a great deal of Wit, much good Observation, and some Learning; but his Essays are wild, rambling, and incoherent; some of them don't treat at all of the Subjects proposed, and others might as well have any other Title as those they wear: They are, in effect, like Mr. Bay's Prologue,

that would do either as Prologue or Epilogue, or serve indifferently for any other Play, as well as that which it was written for.

Though there are to be found, among the Ancients, some little Tracts upon particular Subjects, which, if they were written now, would be called Essays, yet, as they were generally (if we except the Sympoziacks of *Plutarch*) made by Receipts, and done with a View to the Rules which Orators and Declaimers laid down for such Compositions, the Honour of this Invention must still be ascrib'd to *Montaigne*, who first introduced that useful Practice of Digression, into Treatises upon select Subjects, and by giving us every whimsical Conceit that came into his Head, has led us, as it were, dancing after his Morality much more pleasantly than if we walked in the Stilts, or were directed by the leading Strings, which the *Stocks* had accustomed us to. *Montaigne* had a great many Followers in *France*, and some in this Country: But the best, and he that excelled his Original, was *La Bruyere*; the finest and most delicate Remarks, the strongest Sense, and the justest Reasoning, all embellished by an Elegance of Style, and a Felicity of Expression, are to be found in his Works; to which we must add, that the frequent Egotisms, the needless Quotations, the whimsical Display of the Author's Character and Manners at every Period, and other Impertinences, which pass upon some for Humour, are not to be met with in him. He has all the Variety and an Appearance of the Irregularity which pleases, but entirely divested of the Digression and Distraction which confound and disgust the Readers in these Performances.

formances. In short, reading *Montaigne*, is hunting in a Country where you start so much Game as to spoil your Sport; while *La Bruyere* gives you all the Pleasure and Variety of the Chace, without the Fatigue of following the Prey too far.

Without arraigning the Taste of others, I will venture to say, that nothing in this Way worth Observation has appeared at home till the *Taylor* began to retail his Pennyworths of Wit. Several Political Tracts, it is true, have appeared, and some argumentative Discourses, which had their Share of Merit, but did not come within this Species of Writing. The Character of *Bickerstaff*, had it been real, was more upon the Humourist and whimsical than that of *Montaigne*; and I believe the Fiction which was seen in it, by being natural, heighten'd the Pleasure which it gave us; besides, the Limits of his Paper prevented his being so diffuse and prolix as we often find the *Frenchman*, who, for want of such a Confinement, sometimes disgusts us. The *Spectator* and *Nestor Ironside* are Characters also excellently well adapted to the Creation of our Pleasures, by our Knowledge of their being fictitious: For such is our Malignity of Temper, that we can't forgive a real Author acting or thinking oddly or idly, though our Entertainment arises from thence, because we consider him as a reasonable Man, and obliged by a superior Duty to another kind of Behaviour: but we can indulge an imaginary or assumed Personage in any ludicrous, frolicksome, or whimsical Words or Opinions, because we know that he only plays the Fool for our Delight and Amusement. Thus *Montaigne's* Faults are the

Beauties of *Bickerstaff* and *Ironside*; and thus *Cibber* and *Hyppesty* are applauded on the Stage for what they would run the Hazard of Correction in private Life.

Certainly, writing under an assumptive Character is a fine Improvement in this Way; and, I believe, the Novelty of it, without derogating from the Wit, Humour, Good Sense, or excellent Style of those mentioned Papers, made up the greatest Part of their Merit; the little Incidents of human Life, Pieces of Conversation, and familiar Arguments, which may be thrown into Writing under such a Character, give it the Advantage of all other Methods: And, I am of Opinion, it must eternally please, if, as new Matter is continually rising, some Geniuses could be found able to treat it in a Manner equal to their Predecessors. But of that we despair; the Stamp-A^tt first, and then the Rise and Multiplication of Weekly Journals, being a sort of Prohibition to all future Essays in that Manner.

The Invention of Weekly Journals was, I believe, owing to the Taste which the Town began to entertain from the Writings of the *Spectator*, and others. Small Essays were so much liked, that it was imagined worth while to put a little Wit, and a great Deal of History into a large Quantity of Paper, and sell it for a less Price than the Stamp-Duty had rais'd the Half-Sheet Treatise to. The Project succeeded, and we have had several excellent Things published in this Way, some that in their Fame almost rival'd any Thing that went before them: but, by the Nature of their Subjects, ought to be excluded from this Class of Writing; which, whatever

whatever Liberties Men take, ought never to be drawn into Controversies about Religion or Government; Things that, to be sure, require a more orderly and regular Manner of Treating, than is consistent with the Freedom and Latitude of an Essay.

But, as I said before, we have lost the Advantage of Entertaining in any other Manner. These Papers come abroad so seldom, that, if a Humour was begun, Men would forget it before it could be prosecuted, and the Jest would be lost before it was found. We have no other Way of Communicating our Thoughts, but by Way of Letter to the Author of this or that Journal; and in no Character but that of a Philosopher, Critick, or Divine; in which we are to lay down some important Point, and gravely and solemnly discuss it. Thus we intrude upon the Pulpit, and seem never to think, that to mend the Heart, it is necessary to delight the Imagination.

This certainly is missing the *Mark*, and these little *Essays* are written in the truest *Taste*, when they cloath good *Sense* with *Humour*, and embellish good *Morals* with *Wit*; when they instruct *Familiarly*, and reprove *Pleasantly*; when they don't swell above *Comprehension*, nor sink below *Delicacy*: In short, when they adapt the *Wisdom* of the *Ancients* to the *Gust* of the *Moderns*, and constrain *Montaigne's* Pleasantries within *BICKERSTAFFE's* Compass.

April 9. 1726.



On the DEATH of Sir CLEMENT WEARG.

To &c.

SIR,

THE Death of Sir *Clement Wearn*, which happened last Week, was an Accident so sudden and unexpected, that the Shock it gave to all true Lovers of Merit was at first scarcely felt; our Sorrow was some time suspended, to make Room for our Surprize; which, at length, gives way, while that Anguish returns which is imbitter'd by being fruitless. The Grief of all good Men will be at once justified and encreas'd by this cruel Reflection, That if Virtue, Probity, Learning, good Sense, and all the fine Qualities which accomplish a Man for this World, had entitled him to a longer Stay in it, their Tears had now been needless: But alas!

—*Cadit & Ripheus, justissimus unus
Qui fuit in Teucris, & servantissimus æqui.
Diis aliter visum*—

—*Nec te tua plurima, Pantheu,
Labentem pietas, nec Apollinis infula texit.*

Nor Justice, nor Piety, nor Learning, can set their Possessors above the Vulgar in this Point. We find the Ancients so fond of shewing their Esteem for Merit of any kind, that

the

the Death of every deserving Man was commonly attended with some Marks of publick Grief, or publick Gratitude: We find some of them, on the Death of a famous Poet, which happened in Battle, publickly lamenting the Loss, and enacting Laws to exempt that Character from such Dangers for the future; and we find others, at the Death of a Fabulist, who had been in the low Condition of a Slave amongst them, testifying their Respect to his Memory, by raising a Statue in Honour of him. It must be confess'd, that these Characters were in those Days something more useful and exalted than we can at present conceive them to be; but allowing them their full Glory, if such Honours as we mentioned were paid to them, what Grief, what Veneration, what Testimonies of publick Sorrow must have been paid to the Ashes of such a Citizen as Sir *Clement Wearing* by an ancient Commonwealth, which he had served and adorned, as he has done ours? Yet such is our Corruption, that, most probably, this faint Essay will be the only publick Mark of our Grief and Gratitude.

Sorry I am, that it is not in my Power, from my own Knowledge, to describe those amiable Qualities of his private Life, and those familiar Virtues which made him the Delight of his Friends, and Joy of his Acquaintance; but as the publick Character, in which I had an Opportunity of observing him, was, when well supported, sufficient to found a true and lasting Praise upon, his Behaviour in it is a Reason that I the less regret my Want of full Information in the other. His Skill in his Profession was more extensive than any Thing but his Integrity:

tegrity: He found the Method of joining and combining those two different Talents, fine Parts and strong Application. By means of the latter, he was more a Master of the Subject he spoke on, than any other Person could be; and by means of the former, he was capable of setting his own Ideas in such Order, and laying them so regularly before his Auditors, that it was their Fault if they did not always take them as strongly as he conceiv'd them. He was perfect Master of the Art of reconciling those two seeming Contrarieties, Conciseness and Perspicuity, in Discourse: He never spoke a superfluous Word at the Bar, nor ever omitted a necessary Sentence: He was acquainted with the solemn declamatory Way of the Ancients, and despised it: He distinguish'd justly between Verbosity and Eloquence: He struck into a Way of his own; which, though new, was perfect; and though singular, just: Had he lived, he would have been the Inventor and Standard of true *English* Oratory: His Harangues were weighty and nervous; rather convincing than perswasive; more fraught with Argument than Supplication: He knew well he was addressing himself to Men of Sense, and therefore spoke to their Understandings; rightly judging, that the Passions ought only to be applied to where they have the Ascendant over Reason, and that consequently the common Rules of Rhetoriック are only to be practis'd on Boys and Women.

Thus he not only appears sufficiently knowing in Polite Letters, to have raised a Reputation upon them alone, and so great a Master in that Science, which fitted him for the Service of

of his Country, that, as a Lawyer, he might have hoped eternal Fame; but also to have had a Soul of such Probity, as was only capable of turning those two fine Accomplishments to their proper Uses, which are advancing the Happiness of Mankind, and promoting the Good of Society. He did his Duty to his King, and was rewarded for it by the Esteem of the People: His useful Qualities were so blended with those which are called Ornamental, that it was hard to say which exceeded the other in him; tho' it was easy to see that he exceeded every one else in both.

His Preferment was as uncommon as his Merits, for it was the Reward of them; he got it without Prayer or Price; and he kept it without Hatred or Envy: He was not only a good Lawyer, but a good Man. He died too soon for the Service of his Country; but he lived long enough to give our Youth, who are bred in his Way, the Model of a Perfect Character.

Had his Days been prolonged, he would have fulfilled all the Expectations of his Country, which his immature Death has blasted. He would have reached the highest of those Promotions, which our Constitution appoints for Rewards of that Excellence he posses'd: We all thought we foresaw it, because we all wished it: And I own there is nothing could make me pleased with his Death, but a Certainty that we were mistaken. I had rather attribute it to the Cruelty of Fate, than to the Corruption of the Age I lived in, that some future Historian should observe, that a Man, with the Learning and Parts of *Cicero*, and the Integrity and Honesty of *Cato*, was not to be found in any publick

lick Character of Trust, nor furnished any Materials to the Story of his own Times; other than that refined uncommon Praise, that his Life was crowned with universal Esteem, and his Death attended with universal Sorrow.

Sir *William Temple* observes, in his Discourse of Heroick Virtue, that a great many Accidents must concur with Merit, towards forming a compleat Character; amongst which he reckons long Life as one of the happiest: Undoubtedly Numbers of Heroes and Statesmen have been taken off abruptly, that, had they lived to compleat their Designs, might have outshined in Glory those whom we have set up for the brightest Patterns of Greatness. Let us imagine, some Hundreds of Years hence, a Critick, reading the Name of Sir *Clement Wragg* in a List of the Solicitors-General; can he ever conceive that a Man, whose Preferment he finds reach no higher, was esteemed one of the most deserving of the Age he lived in? Had *Cæsar* been put to Death before he was sent into *Gaul*, would the World ever have thought that he could have formed those vast Designs which he afterwards executed? No certainly; we are unwilling to allow even Potential Merit to People not raised high above us. Merit, to be well observed, must be seen through a certain Medium; like Painting, it must be hung up in an advantageous Place, shewn in a just Light, and viewed at a proper Distance. We must allow the untimely Death of Sir *Clement* to be a Misfortune in this Point; yet, if there lives any Person that has a nearer Interest in his Reputation than the Bulk of his Countrymen, I think they may be very well comforted with the Application

plication of a Verse, which I cannot tell where
I met with, but, as near as I can remember, is
to this Purpose.

*The Man whose Country's Tears bedew his Hearse
Has lived his Day—*

I am, Sir,

Your Humble Servant,

*April 16.
1726.*

JUSTICOLA.



of



Of Coffee-House POLITICIANS.

THERE is no Set of People in the World so curious and inquisitive into the Conduct of their Superiors, as the Natives of this Kingdom ; and, perhaps, none so frequently and so idly abused in this Matter : It is truly pleasant to listen sometimes to the odd Notions, and absurd Observations, which one may hear uttered in Coffee-Houses upon this Head, by Men of deep Speculation in the Political Way. It unluckily happens that some Men of Parts and Knowledge have, or fancy they have, an Interest in making their Countrymen Dupes ; in order to which they pitch upon this Method : One of them gets surrounded by People of great Curiosity but small Judgment, of strong Appetite for Politicks, but bad Digestion ; and in two Hours Conversation, by divesting himself of his own Rationality, strips off their little Understandings.

I, the other Day, fell into a Company, by Accident, at a Coffee-House near *Temple-Bar*, from which one of those Dictators had just risen : The Company was an exact Representative of the Genteel Part of the Commons of *Great Britain* ; for it was composed of a Country Gentleman, a rich Citizen, a Dabler in Phisick, a Retainer of the Law, and an Orthodox Parson : As I was pretty free with most of them, I sat down among them without Ceremony, and found them just entering upon a Comment

Comment on what the Gentleman who retired had delivered to them. Their Conversation, as I believe it was all from the Sincerity of their Hearts, convinced me of the Truth of that Axiom, as well in Politicks as Religion, That there is no Notion, how foolish, absurd, or ridiculous soever it be, that won't find its Believers and Asserters among Mankind, nay, and among that Part of it, who, from the Education they had, or might have had, should be supposed capable of thinking more clearly and properly.—The First that declared himself was the Citizen, who after maturely ruminating on what was said, assured us that the Gentleman spoke Truth; that Things were in a very bad Way; that he'd presently sell out all his Stock, for, added he, in a lower Voice, which he accompanied with a Wink and a Nod, “The Duke de Ripperda, being a Dutchman himself, will, by his Personal Interest with his Country, keep the United Provinces out of the Treaty of Hanover; so that poor we are left in the Lurch, Faith.

The 'Squire, who, tho' he jump'd in Opinion with the good Company, was not so sanguine for the Cause as to sacrifice his Joke to it, tap'd the Citizen upon the Shoulder, and with an Air of awkward Affectation, asked him what he thought of the Duke of *W*'s Preferment at the Court of *Spain*? I am told, cry'd he, and laughed, “That he has touch'd the Duke de Ripperda for three thousand Pistoles, i' Gad I wonder how he brought it about without City Security, Mr. Freeport, ha!—To which the Citizen very gravely reply'd, “It nothing at all surprizes me, Mr. Leapdike,

" for the Duke *de Ripperda* is a Man who loves
 " Trade and Commerce, nay, and I believe,
 " understands it as well as any Man who has
 " not served an Apprentiship. His Grace of
 " *W*— is exactly of the same Taste, witness
 " his condescending to become a Member of
 " a certain Brotherhood in our City: Now
 " where's the Wonder that this good and pro-
 " mising Disposition should incline the *Spaniard*
 " Minister in his Favour?— But let me tell you,
 " Sir, the Duke of *W*— is a good Politician,
 " I have crack'd some Bottles with him at cer-
 " tain Times, and, from his Conversation, I
 " will venture to pronounce him a sensible Man,
 " and one that knows what he does: I wish
 " though he had been at Home at the last
 " Election of a Sheriff, for then we had car-
 " ry'd the Day; but, perhaps, it's as well as
 " it is, so I say again, that I'll sell out.

Here all the Company agreed, in approving
 what he said; but I was very modestly going
 to propose some Doubts which lay upon me,
 when the Lawyer, who has a particular Friend-
 ship for me, cut me short, by a well-timed,
 and a shrewd Observation, quoth he, " There
 " is no diving into Politicks, nor any med-
 " dling with the Actions of great Men. The
 " Duke of *W*—, as Mr. *Freeport* observes,
 " is a very great Politician, and, to be sure, a
 " very cunning Fellow; and, between you and
 " I, 'tis said, he wants Money very much:
 " Now, who can tell but this same Trick of
 " a blue Ribbond and an Embassy, and so forth,
 " was contrived to make some People in Eng-
 " land talk ill of him? No bad Project i'faith;
 " for if he has but proper Witnesses, he may
 bring

" bring so many Actions of *Scan. Mag.* as will
" recover him Money enough to repurchase all
" the Land he has sold; for the Law allows
" him in such Cases swinging Damages." I
was so convinced with my Friend's Reasons,
that I thought it proper to curb that Zeal
which might lead me to utter Things irrever-
tent of a Peer of *Great Britain*, and therefore
acquiesced in the Humour of the Company.

The Physician, who had not spoke much
this while, now demanded our Opinions of the
Wild Boy that came lately to Court, and gave
us a short History of him. The Squire, after
he had intimated that the Court and the Minis-
try took some Pleasure in him, wished he had
him turned loose upon his Ground, and hugg'd
himself in the Pleasures he and his Neighbours
were to have in that new Kind of Hunting:
But what I observed most was, that, while the
Physician talked of the Boy, the Citizen, by
particular Looks and Gestures, discovered how
little he was pleased with it, and every now and
then uttered, *It will never do, a vile Trick;* with
some other imperfect Vociferations. I was at
a loss to know what could shock him in that
Story, 'till my Friend, the Lawyer, thrusting
his Nose in my Ear, assured me, that the Wild
Boy was no other than Prince —— who was
brought over to learn the Language, in order
to gain, by Surprize, the Good-Will of the
People. I was astonished at the prodigious
Folly of that Conceit, but was soon relieved
from my Amazement, by an Observation of the
Parson's, who as yet had spoke very little, but
seem'd to listen very attentively to every Thing
that was said, with a Pipe stuck in a good
K. rid

rid unthinking Face: But while this Discourse was going on, he discharged an ample Mouthful of Smoke almost full in my Face, tipp'd me the half Whisper, and with a wise Aspect pronounced, that we *lived in a damned Atheistical Age*, and that this was *all Superstition*; which, for my Satisfaction, he confirmed with an Oath, and return'd to his peaceful State of Taciturnity..

By this Time, I was very glad to find the Company inclined to disperse. I took the Opportunity, and departed very melancholy at a Reflection which that Conversation gave Birth to; it struck strongly on my Thought, that we are all not equally free; and that Providence, by the small Pittance of Understanding, which she distributes among some of us, designed us to be subject to the Controul of others whom she has been kinder to in that Point. The Multitudes that are thus destitute of Reason, are, to me, a strong Argument in Favour of Divine Right, and Arbitrary Power; for certainly those Men whose Quota of Sense only capacitates them blindly to obey, were born to be absolutely commanded. Such People cannot taste the Blessings of a Government like ours, and therefore are not intitled to them. Creatures, that think all Happiness in this Life was intended for their Leaders and Directors, and that they themselves were only made to be led and driven, ought never to feel more Ease than they lay Claim to. How far less absurd are these Nations than the Opinion of the *Russian Peasantry*, a People among whom, tho' Christianity is professed, yet does not, it seems, exalt their Natures much above their Fellow Brutes. A *Lutheran Parson*,

Parson, among other Questions of Religion, asked some of them, one Day, what they thought of Heaven? To which they very seriously answered, That they could not flatter themselves that Heaven was made for such poor Fellows as them, and frankly own'd they believed no Body intitled to it, but the *Czar* and his Boiars.

April 30.
1716.





Of STOCK-JOBBERS.

To &c.

SIR,

THE common Arts of *Stock-jobbing* have been long complained of, as very great Grievances; yet I believe were never more so, than at present. Formerly, they were only Frauds committed upon the Proprietors of Stocks, and the Source of Mischiefs to private Men; but now they are become publick Enormities, and affect both the Government and People in a very great Degree: The first, by the Shocks they give *Publick Credit*, at a Time when it is most emphatically the Nation's Interest to support it; and the latter, by alarming Men with Fears, and filling their Minds with Danger and Terrors, which have no Foundation in Truth, but are the meer Devices of a biting *Stock-jobber's Brain*.

One of the greatest Abuses in the Management of the Stocks is, the Practice of buying and selling for a Day future; which it seems the *Adepts* in this Science call by the genteel Names of *Bull* and *Bear*: And this is calculated purely for the Advantage of those, who having no Stock in Hand, and but little Money, may be either small Gainers or Losers, by paying or receiving the Difference between the Market-Price and the Price they agreed for when the Day comes: This, I say, is the greatest Abuse, nay

may almost the only One. For selling and transferring the Stock we fairly and honestly possess, at the current Value, is no more a Fraud, than buying it in the same Manner; while this, instead of a Bargain, becomes an indefinite Wager, that Stocks will rise or fall by such a Day; and, I humbly am of Opinion, ought to be suppress'd like other publick Gaming, because carried on with as much Knavery, and productive of worse Consequences. By the Management of a Card or a Die, a Fool may be trick'd out of Fifty or a Hundred Pieces, in which he is himself the only Sufferer; but by the Management of a *Bear* well sold *at this Time of Day*, not only the Jobber shall carry his Point, by the Ruin of his Antagonist, but shall frighten and intimidate Hundreds of unskilful People to sell out their Stocks, to their own great Disadvantage, and the no less Detriment of Publick Credit. As for Example: A Company of Bites find out some sanguine Gentlemen, who are pretty well assured, that from the Condition our Government is in, the Funds must rise; with these they agree to deliver a great Quantity of Stock some Day next Month, at a certain Price; from this Moment it is their Care to depreciate the Stocks so, that this certain Price must be more than the Market-Rate, when it becomes payable; and this they bring about by buzzing strange Stories in the *Alley*, shewing Letters from *Holland*, with formidable Accounts of the *Pretender*, the *Czarina*, *Port-Mahon* and *Gibraltar*, *Bremen* and *Verden*; with a Hundred other untraceable Villanies; by which not only they accomplish the Fraud they intended, but involve Thousands in the Ruin which they wrought to bring it about.

These Men (if a Man ought to be merry with such Villains) seem to use *Publick Credit*, as *Nero* did the Christians, who according to *Hudibras*,

—wrap'd them up in Skins of Bears,
And then set Dogs about their Ears.

I don't reckon much upon the Religion of these Men, or think that any of those Laws of God can touch such Mens Consciences, which condemn Fraud, Injustice, Falshood, and all their Train: Nor can any Motive taken from a generous Love to Mankind, or Regard to the whole Community, find Access to such Breasts. All this makes it much more to be wish'd that something could be done in a legal Way by that *Government*, which they so much injure, for the immediate Prevention of such destructive Misde-manners: Which, in my poor Opinion, would be doing some Justice to their own Credit, and making some kind of Expiation for the Sufferings of the Innocent.

The first *Law* that I find in our Constitution against the Contrivers and Reporters of false Rumours, for they are both alike guilty, is in the Reign of King *Alfred*; by whom it was ordain-ed, that all such Authors and Reporters of idle Stories should have their Tongues cut out, un-less they redeemed them with the Price of their Heads. To understand what was meant by the Price of their Heads, it will be necessary to inform you, that in those Days *Manslaughter* was only finable, according to the Rank and Degree of the Person slain; and there are to be found in some of the *Saxon* Laws the distinct Prices of every Man's Head from the King down to the Peasant.

Peasant. So that what this Law means is, that the Ransom of his Tongue should cost the Offender so much, as his Life would another; which, since the Punishment was pecuniary, was a good way of making it fall even upon all Transgressors, by proportioning it to their Rank and Fortune. I only mention this old and now useless Law, to shew the Sense there was in former Times of the fatal Tendency of such a Practice. There is another *Law* in the *Statute of Westminster* the first, made in the Reign of King *Edward* the First, which ordains, that the Authors and Reporters of false News and forged Rumours shall be fined and imprisoned at the King's Pleasure. And there was a later Law inflicting a more certain and severe Punishment on such Offenders in the Reign of *Richard* the Second, but it has been since repealed. So that the *Statute of Westminster* is the only Law now in force against any Crime of this Nature. And this Law, it must be confess'd, intended nothing but to prohibit the raising and spreading of such false Reports, as might directly create Discord or propagate Dissensions between the *King* and his *Nobles*, the *King* and his *People*, or the *Nobles* and *Commons*; and therefore it cannot and ought not to be applied to the present Purpose.

But that such Delinquents should escape with Impunity, is a Reproach to our Laws and Constitution. Freedom of Speech, and Opinion concerning all Publick Matters, we find practised and allowed in some of the best constituted Governments; but the most Enthusiaſtick Assertors of popular Liberty cannot produce a Precedent of a Common-wealth's tolerating or indulging the Spreaders of *false Reports*, or *terrifying Rumours*,

mours. Can it be a Spirit of *Patriotism* that sets Men upon depreciating publick Credit, or supporting those who do it? If so, how unlike are our modern Patriots to those glorious Characters of Antiquity, whose first Principle was, *ut ne quid Detrimenti, Respublica capiat*. Some of the most publick-spirited among the *Romans*, at the Time *Hannibal* was incamped within a few Days March of the City, purchased the Ground upon which his Camp stood, at as high a Price as the best Lands about *Rome* would have yielded in a Time of profound Tranquility. This was glorious and true Patriotism, well calculated to keep up the Spirits of the People, and alarm the Enemy by an Appearance of general Intrepidity. And shall we, whenever the Affairs of *Europe* happen to be embarrass'd, tho' the Danger be never so remote or distant from us, countenance with Indemnity those Persons who by magnifying Truths, or, forging Falsehoods insinuate, that our Nation is in the Road to Ruin, and will shortly become Bankrupt? For this, in my humble Opinion, is the Case of those who, at this *critical Juncture*, endeavour to lessen the Credit of our publick Funds, so firmly built upon our National Security.

It would, I think, be becoming the high Province of *Law-makers*, to provide in such a manner against this *Growing Evil*, which at present lays waste the *Fortunes* of those Numbers, who suffer themselves to fall under its Terrors; disturbs every possible Administration of Affairs; and, if it proceeds, threatens Ruin to our greatest Concerns in this World.

May 7. 1726.

PHILONOMOS.

Of



Of the KING's EVIL,

To GE.

SIR,

THE Subject of the following Discourse is very little canvassed by any but Physicians, and to them it would be impertinent to offer it; but as 'tis probable that many of the Observations upon it may have escaped the Generality of Readers, and may be of Use in eradicating a foolish Prejudice, I hope it won't be improper to publish them.

It is a Notion that has, for many Years, obtained an Establishment among us, That the Monarchs of this Southern Part of *Britain* had in their Touch a Sovereign Remedy against a Distemper which, from thence, we have nam'd the *King's Evil*. The Assertors of this Opinion say, That this was a Gift from Heaven conferr'd upon *Edward the Confessor*, for his singular Sanctity, and from him derived to his Successors, Kings of *England*; but with this Restriction, say they, That it is only granted to such as are so rightfully, and in the Hereditary Way; that mere Kings, *de facto*, have no Pretensions to it; and that it continued in the Royal Line till the Extermination of the *Stuart Family*.

It seems that the Assertors of this Doctrine, suppose this Talent, as some Prerogative Law-yers

vers did Allegiance, due to the Person of the King in his Natural Capacity, and by Right of Birth. To those we must answer, by asking this Question; If so, how did it descend to *Harold* first, and then to *William of Normandy*, and his Descendants, who neither of them had any Title to it from their Extraction, since the Heir at Law to the Crown lived for many Years after both their Deaths? Or suppose it given to *William* by the Pope, along with the Kingdom, yet, how came his two younger Sons to hold it in prejudice to the Birth-right of the Elder, as it appears by our Histories they did the Kingdom? Well then, *Stephen* stept in before the Right Heir; did he possess this Gift? Yes, for eighteen Years, or else the Monks lye. Then the Right Line is restored in *Henry II.* But, shortly after, a Breach is made in the Succession by King *John*, who, it seems, usurped this wonderful Faculty, as well as the Kingdom, and left both to his Posterity in due Order, till *Edward III.* assum'd them, even in the Life of his Father, whose Heir he could not be, till the old Gentleman was dead. Thus it continued till the deposing of *Richard II.* and then I should be glad to know what became of it, whether it remained with *Richard* during his Life, or went presently to the next Heir? If it did, the *Mortimers Family*, and from them the House of *York*, must have held it for three-score Years independent of the Crown. This seems to resemble the Division of the Priesthood from the Royal Family of *Judea*; and, as in that Case, so in this, one House held the supreme Authority, and another was blest with the Medicinal Faculty. But when the *York Line*

Line was restored, supposing the Right in the other Race, what became of this Miraculous Quality? Or, if it remained with the Yorkists, what was *Richard III's* Title to it? Or, whether he had any, or not? What had *Henry VII?* Not to insist upon the absolute Necessity we are under of believing either *Mary*, or *Elizabeth*, a Bastard, and so incapable of this Divine Gift; but, to come to our own Times; How happened it that the late Queen *Anne* undertook this Province in Defiance to the Title of the Gentleman Abroad, who pretended to the sole Right of this Patent from Heaven, and then did, and still does continue to practise, as they say, with very good Success?

I have ask'd Questions till I am almost out of Breath, and Questions which I don't expect Answers to; I will ask but one more: There are a more moderate Set of strong Believers, who think this Virtue lies in the Possession of the Crown of King *Edward*, not in the Proximity or Right of Blood; if so, why do they impudently slander the late King *William*, and his present Majesty, as impotent to exert it, because their good Sense has never suffered them to put this ridiculous Project to a Tryal?

Let us next examine how our Monarchs acquired this wonderful Faculty; why God, for Reasons best known to the Monks, gave them the Power of working this Miracle.

— *Credat Iudeus Appella,*
Non ego —

Not to insist upon the Absurdity of our believ-ing Miracles, which tend to prove no reli-gious

gious Doctrine, nor are warranted by the Scripture, is there any thing more silly than to fancy the most Profligate of Men distinguished in such a Manner by an All-just God? For my Part, when I am told that King *John*, *Richard III.* *Henry VIII.* and *Charles II.* wrought Miracles, I can't help thinking that *Simon Magus* had very hard Usage.

Or suppose it, with others, owing to an innate Quality in the Blood of a certain Family, which by its Antipathy to Infection, drives away all that comes within its Touch; sure this Blood ought of it self to be very pure, and incorruptible? I cannot say that the *Struma* was ever found upon any Branch of the Royal Family since holy *Edward's* Time; but who can say that it was not? The *Struma* is a Distemper arising from curdling Particles of acid Blood, which in their Circulation cling together, and occasion a Swelling, and sometimes proceed to a Suppuration. The Gout proceeds from the same sharp Humours in the Blood, but with this Difference, that thro' the Large ness of the curdled Particles, they stop at the Joints, and in time make the Circulation of the Blood more difficult and painful. Now this last Malady has often made bold to attack our English Monarchs, notwithstanding the boasted Purity of their Blood, of which *Henry VIII.* and Queen *Anne*, are Examples. If we may believe a jocular traditional Aphorism of King *James I.* he was not unacquainted with a certain cutaneous Distemper, which no more arises from perfect Purity of Blood, than the *Struma*; and there are living Witnesses of King *James II.*'s being infected with the Venereal Disease in its greatest Force, which

which has still a nearer Relation to the Struma, insomuch that Physicians believe, that a Pox ill cured in the Father, will break out in an Evil on his Son.

But I expect to be cut short, and told, That no Argument can destroy Matter of Fact ; that there are Hundreds living who can bear Testimony against me ; some who have received Cure ; and others who have seen it perform'd. To whom I must answer, That supposing it true, the Cure did not come from the Royal Palm, nor any inherent Virtue in the Monarch ; but the Patients, who are to be thus juggled with, are put, for some Time after their first Application, under the Directions of the King's Physician, who regulates their Diet, and gives them Phyfick ; so that considering this a Distemper in the Blood, 'tis a Wonder they have Occasion for the Touch at all ; When the Physicians have certified that they are fit to be touched, the King strokes their Jaws, ties some Gold about their Neck, a Prayer is mumbled, and *grasso pale*, the Cure is performed ; for which more is due to the Physician's Remedies and Directions, and the Patient's Fancy, than to the Monarch's healing Power. I say this the rather, for that I have met several who underwent this juggling Operation, yet were not cured, as some People said, for want of Faith. But the tying the Gold is the best Jest of all : It seems the King not only possesses this Power himself, but can communicate it to any Thing ; he therefore, of his special good Grace, endues the Gold with a *strumifugous* Virtue ; so that as long as it hangs about the Neck, the Distemper stands banished ; but if it happens to be lost, the Ma-
lady

lady takes Advantage of its Absence, and returns to its old Quarters. This is so ridiculous, that it would be idle to make Arguments against it.

I know the Assertors of this supernatural Power will still put all upon the Fact, and desire me to take a Trip to *Rome*, and be convinced by my own Eyes, or else examine Folks that have returned with their Cures. I think I have accounted before for whatever I may see, or they can tell me; with this Difference in my Favour, That the Journey, Change of Climate, and Diet, may, without other Assistance, bring the Matter about: Therefore I shan't scruple to say, that he in *Rome* is not only an ignorant Pretender to this Art, and a great Enemy to me and my Family, but that *Oliver Cromwell*, who had not a Drop of Royal Blood in his Veins, understood the Cure of the King's-Evil better than he, or any Man of his Name; and yet considering that he has set up the Practice of Phyfick in an Enemy's Country, that he has little else to live by, and that there is no Danger of his coming home to play the Doctor, I think every well-natur'd Man ought to wish the Royal Quack good Success, and a great deal of Busines.

I am Yours, &c.

A Seventh Son.



To

Of the STUDY of the LAW.

To &c.

SIR,

YOU have done me the Favour to publish some Letters of mine, treating of the Laws and Government of this Country; which I have Reason to believe were not the most pleasing Entertainments you had in your Power to give the gayer Part of your Readers. In order therefore to your Justification and mine, it will not be improper to examine into and expose this strange Prejudice of Education, which teaches us to neglect and contemn what is the most useful in every Degree of Life, and let our Understandings run after Gugaws and Trifles: in *some* Instances difficult to be obtained; and in *all* insignificant in their Use.

I will not doubt to assert, that every Gentleman, who would qualify himself to serve his Country, ought to know so much of its *Laws* as might acquaint him with its Constitution; and be so far conversant in its *Commerce*, as might enable him to judge of its Use. Without such Knowledge, how is it possible he should be instrumental in preserving its Liberties, or promoting its Happiness? I am not advising young Men of Fortune either to become Barristers or Merchants. I am very sensible that the Part of our Law which is concerned in the *Canvassing* of *Private Property*, is a Study very capable of giving

ing a wrong Turn to a Mind not sufficiently prepared ; and therefore would advise no more of it than was necessary to the understanding the Constitutional Part, and to the illustrating our History : And tho' the Practice of *Trade* has a Tendency to contract the Mind, and fill it with low Notions and narrow Ideas, in which Men of Quality and Rank ought to have no Part ; yet I think the *Theory* of it ought to be studied, as useful, and of the highest Importance to such a Nation as this.

Whatever Objection the latter of these Positions may meet with, the first of them can be supported by uncontestable Authority. *Cicero* seems in a *Rapture*, when speaking of the Laws of his own Country, he sticks not to prefer the *Twelve Tables* for their Usefulness, to all the Writings of all the Philosophers : I hope it will be but modest, if, in Imitation of him, I venture to affirm, that *Magna Charta* is of more Use to an *Englishman*, than Myriads of *Volumes of Poems, Novels, and Romances*.

Yet how strangely different is the common Notion ? Young Noblemen, that by our Constitution are born the Judges of our Lives and Properties, are educated in a manner the least conducive towards qualifying them for that High Office. If one of them happens to have a fine Genius, his Managers take care that it shan't be sower'd, as they term it, with Instructions that may teach him to act up to his Character in Life ; but immediately when he's fit for such Study, he's hurried away to Travel, in order to learn the Manners and Customs of other Countries, before he's acquainted with those of his own : He spends three or four Years

Years abroad, and in that Time acquires a fine Taste of Musick, Painting and Architecture; and then returns so ignorant of what ought to be his first Concern, that when he's introduced into that august Assembly, of which he is by his Birth a Member, he enters as a perfect Stranger. And I am sorry to say, that this is too true of several Gentlemen, of a lower Rank; who, by this kind of Education, when they become Legislators, are in danger of neglecting, or breaking, or abusing a *Trust*, as well as hurting their Country.

I would not be understood to condemn or despise those polite Arts and Sciences; but give me leave to say, they ought not to possess the first Place in a Man's Mind; they are at best but ornamental Qualities, and therefore only secondary to such as are useful. To say otherwise, would be in effect to affirm, that the *Professors* and *Connoisseurs* of them, are Characters of equal Dignity with the Givers and Teachers of Laws; and, ridiculous Comparison, that *Palladio*, *Da Vinci* and *Corelli*, are Authors more excellent and more useful, than *Coke*, *Selden*, or *Hale*.

Quite otherwise was the Education of the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*: Every Man in his Youth made himself Master of moral Philosophy and the Laws of his Country, all the Learning then in Vogue; for foreign Languages were not then, as now, the Study and Perplexity of Youth. The *Romans* particularly had Law-Cases in their Schools, upon which they made Arguments and Declamations; and as soon as they came to Maturity, frequented the Courts, and defended the Causes of their Friends, Relations, and Dependents;

dants; and this without Reward: For the Heads of every Family were, by the Laws, obliged to give this kind of Protection to all their Tenants, Servants, and poor Relations; who were called *Clients*, from a Latin Word signifying such Defence; as he who had the Learning was called *Patron*, for giving it. Nor was the Name of *Advocate*, nor its mercenary Uses, found out, till the Luxury and Vices of the *Romans* had so dis-qualified the Nobility from acting this generous Part, that the People, accused and unable by their Ignorance to defend themselves, were obliged to hire such Men as by their Learning were thought proper for the Employment.

That it was formerly customary to educate the young Noblemen of this Kingdom in the Knowledge of our Laws, is I think pretty evident. Besides the Assertion of Sir *John Fortescue*, who says that none but Noblemen and Prime Gentlemen could be educated in this Way, for the Expence of it; we have Instances in our History of several Peers, who, being so by their Birth, were honoured with Places in the Law, which nothing but a Competency of Knowledge could qualify them to hold, according to the Tenor of the Laws then and still in force. There also goes a Tradition, which *Shakespear*, who generally proceeds upon good Grounds in Historical Matters, seems so well satisfied with, that he builds upon it in his Play of *Henry the Sixth*, Part the First, that the famous Hatred between the Dukes of *York* and *Somerset*, which so distracted the Kingdom in that Reign, was occasioned by a Jar which commenced between them when Youths, in a moot Argument at the *Temple*. Further, we find this same Sir *John Fortescue*, in the same

fame Reign, made Governor and Tutor to Prince Edward; whom we are certain he instructed in the Laws, since his Treatise *de Laudibus Legum Anglie* is address'd to the Prince, and seems particularly written for his Use. It is to such a generous Education, that we are to attribute the Love of our Ancestors for their Laws and Rights; to which Passion we owe our present Liberty and Prosperity: And I can make no doubt but it was the Effect of such noble Instructions which appeared in the whole Parliament, when, upon a remarkable Attempt to subvert the Constitution, they all cried out, as it were with one Voice, *Nobis Leges Anglie matari.*

To what the Disuse of this Education is owing, I cannot say; except to a Notion, that the Civil Law for Men this way inclined, was as well the more agreeable as the more polite Study; which has therefore thrown the Common Law out of our good Graces, as formerly it had like to have done out of our Constitution. Nor has New Rome shewn her Power and Influence in this Case to be less than that of Ancient Rome; for as the Old, by the Conquest and Possession of all Europe, imposed her Laws and Regulations upon them, which are generally observed to this Day, and called the Civil or Roman Law; so the New, by the Power which she had over Mens Consciences, fixed another upon them, as generally received and obey'd under the Title of the Canon Law; which first appeared about Nine Hundred Years ago, when the Supremacy of Popes began to be asserted. Our Deliverance from the first was owing to the Hardiness of the Saxons, who, after they had made the Roman Power shake in Germany, and conquered their

Descendants who were mixed with the *Britons* here, disdained to be governed by Laws devised by their Slaves; and therefore, gloriously singular, pursued the Rules laid down for them by their Ancestors to walk by; and in this Sense Mr. Pope's Lines are particularly true, when he says, that we

— all Foreign Laws despis'd,
And kept unconquer'd and unciviliz'd.

The *Canon Law* was also kept out by the *Saxons* Monarchs, after their Conversion, keeping the Regimen of the Church in their own Hands, and not stooping to the Papal Power. But when the *Normans* came in, as they had Obligations to the *Pope*, that Point was given up; and when the *Bishops* became dependent on the *Papal Authority*, in Obedience to the Foreign Prince who was their *Head*, they introduced both the *Roman Laws* into the Courts they set up; which have continued with some Struggles and Difficulties in Possession ever since. To this is owing the Reputation of those Laws among Scholars, and all the Provisions and Encouragements for Professors and Students in this kind of Learning, while the *Common Law* has stood by itself in the *Inns of Court*.

If there were Professors of this useful Knowledge, as there are of all other Sciences, in all the *British Universities*; the Bar, and the Qualifications for it, might be left still to be the Care of the *Inns of Court*: But then it might be so contrived, that young Gentlemen, while they are going thro' what they call their Studies, may take such a Tincture of this general Knowledge

ledge of our own Constitution and our own Laws, as may render them not altogether Strangers when they enter into the Character of Law-makers. But this is far above my Province; and belongs to Those, who, while they are as much Well-wishers to the Good of their Country, have it more in their Power to put their Thoughts in act, than

May 21. Yours, PHILONOMOS.
1726.



~~EXAMINED AND APPROVED~~

Of the PRESERVATION of OUR LAWS.

To &c.

SIR,

IN a former Letter I congratulated my Country upon the Precautions our Legislators were taking against the future Mismanagements and Insufficiencies of the Under-Officers in the Court of Chancery, by an Act for securing the Suitors in that Court from the Probability of any thing fatal to them for the Time to come. They have since that extended their Care to preserving the Honour of National Justice, by resolving to make good the past Deficiencies in that Court: Which is, I think, such an Act of Generous and Compassionate Justice, if it be proper so to speak, as deserves the highest Applauses. And especially when we see so great an Evil cured by no other Burthen, than a small additional Tax upon some particular Law-Instruments; which can fall upon none but those who enter into *Law-Suits*, and will thus turn even our *Litigiousness* itself into *Benevolence* in its Effect and Consequence.

The Censures that are thrown upon the Management of the Law, and the Objections that are made to the Administration of the publick Justice, are already numberless. Should such an universal and extended Calamity have been suffered

ferred to continue amongst them, it would not only give an Air of Truth to the Majority, but add Weight and Significancy to the frivolous Part of them. Without entring into a Defence of the needless Delays, Impertinences and vile Practices, which Men of small Consciences find means to mix with the Distribution of our National Justice, we may say in favour of our general Method, that all polite Nations have admitted Forms and Ceremonies into the Constitution of their Laws; and that it ever was in Proportion to the Barbarity and Lowness of Property among every People, that Controversies of this kind were expedited in a more Extraordinary manner. Men that have no great Share, either of Liberty or Property, are not much solicitous about the Manner in which they strip one another of those Blessings. It is owing to this, that among the unpolished Ancients, and several modern Barbarians, we find such extraordinary and amazing Ways of executing expeditious Justice. The Trial Ordeal; or by Fire and Water, was a Trick to save the long Delay that might be necessary to come at the Truth in a doubtful Case. Trial by Battle was another which the Ancients used. And both these we reasonably consider as no better than tossing up Cross or Pile for a Decision of Right and Wrong. The Inhabitants about the Mountain *Magan*, upon the Frontiers of the Kingdom of *Fez*, have, as we are told, no publick Judicatures erected among them; but their way of Proceeding is, when any Contest happens between Party and Party, to stop the first Traveller they meet with, refer the litigated Point to him, and stand by his Award. This is hardly

L. 4 better

better than the former, from the Impossibility there is that a meer Stranger should be well enough acquainted with their Manners and Customs, to judge properly of their Case. Hundreds of other Instances might be given of People, whose Ignorance can't distinguish the Benefit of Laws from the Abuse; but because the Forms and Methods of Justice seem impertinent to them, proceed to destroy all Form and Order whatsoever. This is an Humour which the *English* Nation seems not a little inclined to; and therefore an Endeavour to remedy and prevent Abuses in the Laws and their Administration, is in some measure necessary to the Preservation of them; and consequently a Work which every good Subject, whose Inheritance those Laws are, ought to shew their Gratitude for, as well as express their Satisfaction in.

It is very much in the Temper of Man to run from one Extreme to another; and our Histories are full of Incidents, which shew us more particularly inclin'd to this Weather-cock Humour than any of our Neighbours. What a Transition was there made in the time of our Fathers, from a Monarch, whose Ministers had set him upon abusing that Power which was legally placed in him, to a State of Confusion, in which the necessary Power was legally vested in no Body, nor could any Man tell whom he was to obey; from good Laws, because their Names had been borrowed by designing Men for bad Purposes, to a Subversion of our Constitution, and a Dissolution of almost all Laws? These are the Evils which we have chiefly to dread, whenever our Laws are permitted to warp from their Bias; and for

secu-

securing us against these Evils, we are indebted to the great Wisdom of our Legislature. There is a Maxim in our Law, that in all Cases 'tis better to suffer a particular Inconvenience than a general Mischief; but there is a Disposition in our Humours, rather than a bear particular Inconvenience, to create a general Mischief: Happy are we therefore to be represented by Men, who know at once our Laws and our Tempers, and in order to secure the Former, provide against the Latter!

I expect to hear great Complaints from the Underling Retainers of the *Law*, against the Manner in which this Remedy is to be provided, but I believe every Body will consider Injuries to *Them*, as Benefits to Mankind: and therefore conclude, that if They have reason to be displeased, the Nation in General has cause to rejoice. They will think it hard to have their Business lessen'd; but I think, if that should be the Event, our Representatives have done even a more meritorious Thing than they are aware of; since if this Law should at any Time prevent a vexatious or iniquitous Law-Suit, it will add, at every such Time, the Merit of preserving new Families from Ruin, to the Charity of having relieved some who had already well-nigh sunk into it.

To conclude. As drying the Tears of the Widow, and hushing the Cries of the Orphan, have been always esteemed the noblest Acts of Charity; this Law may be styled *Charity*, as well as *Justice*. It will be a National Praise to us, when it is said Abroad, that the *British Legislature* have taken Care to make good to the Distressed, a Sum of above Eighty Thousand

sand Pounds, which the Mismanagement of a few Men in Places of Trust had dissipated. For the sake of this Act, the Gentlemen who compose the present Parliament, will in future Times be distinguished by this resolv'd Characteristick of Glory, that they redress'd Injuries which they did not cause, and pity'd Misfortunes which they did not feel.

I am, Yours, &c.

*June 11.
1726.*

PHILONOMOS.



of

Of PRIME MINISTERS.

THE sudden and unexpected Disgrace of the Spanish Prime Minister is an Event that probably may busy wiser Heads than mine; I mean the Statesmen and Politicians of *Europe*: But as the Use I shall make of it will be only to draw some Reflections from it, which may perhaps be of Service to my Fellow-Subjects, I hope I shall not be thought ridiculous for setting out with such Company.

Those who are acquainted with the History of Royal Favourites, will not be surpriz'd at what seems the most wonderful Circumstance in this Matter, that is, the sudden Rise, and no less sudden Fall, of this Gentleman: Kings have Passions, and their Servants Frailities, like all other Men; and when we reflect on the numerous Mischiefs, Cruelties, and unjust Severities which have risen from these Causes, we are naturally taught to bless our own Constitution, and admire the Laws we live under: Among us no Subject can be absolutely undone by a Nod, or a Frown; the Monarch's Wrath may dispossess him of what Advantages he reaps from the Royal Service; but his Country's Voice must be added to his Master's Suffrage, before he can be esteemed or punished as guilty; an Advantage which will always have this good Effect, that the Minister, if he be of himself honest, need not be awed by the Royal Authority

rity in any Thing that is inconsistent with the Interest of his Country.

The Change of Ministers is now-a-days of as much Importance to a Nation, as the Change of Monarchs: There are, at present, very few Princes of *Europe* who plan their own Measures, and pursue their own Schemes: These are generally the Contrivances of the primier Favourite, and at his Disgrace, however well calculated they may be for the Service of his Country, fall to the Ground, and prove abortive: All is to begin again; contrary Methods are taken; nor will his Successors follow his Designs, for fear of meeting his Fate. The various and unsettled Condition of the *Spanish* Monarchy now, and for this ten Years past, is a Proof that what I have been saying is more than mere Speculation: What divided Counsels, what contradictory Resolutions have they not enter'd into? how different are their Projects now from what they were at the Peace of *Utrecht*, though it be evident their Interest is still the same. They are a melancholy Proof of the Inconveniences arising from a frequent Removal of Ministers; while our own Country, where a Minister needs only be just to be safe, shews us, by our Ease and Happiness, the Wisdom of that Ordinance. We have had few Changes of Ministry in this Reign; and the Consequence is, that the Current of our Affairs has all along ran in a safe, gentle, clear, and easy Stream.

As to the History of the Gentleman, who has given occasion to these Thoughts, I confess that I know no more than that he is a *Dutch* Man by Birth, who threw himself into the King of *Spain's* Service, from an Opinion that it was
more

more advantageous than that of his own Country. He has been little heard of till within these eighteen Months, during which time he brought about a Treaty of Peace, which has surprized all *Europe*, became a Grandee of *Spain*, and arrived at almost the highest Employments, both for Honour and Profit, that a Subject of that Country is capable of. If it be true that he has been false to the Interests of his Master, as is reported, he teaches us a good Lesson; he gives us a Caution against employing and trusting Foreigners, and plainly points out to us, that a present and a future Interest in a Community are not sufficient to attach Men effectually to it; that an Original and natural Tie is in some measure necessary; that Men ought not to be trusted with great Power, who have a Retreat provided in case they abuse it; and, in short, that no Man is fit to be the Minister of a Prince, whose Subject he was not born.

This Thought naturally introduces a Remark, obvious enough, upon the *Spanish* Nation. It is odd that we should look out, and find in almost all the Courts of *Europe* Ministers from *Spain* who are not Natives of that Country; nor can I suppose it owing to any Partiality in the present Monarch, or any Neglect of his natural-born Subjects, since he particularly distinguishes no one foreign Nation by this Kind of Favour, and that to which he owes his Birth least: How then can we account for this extraordinary Conclusion, which must follow from the Premises we have laid down, That the *Spaniards*, a brave ingenious People, born in a good Soil, and a fine Climate, should be so far lost to the Wit and Gallantry they were formerly fam'd

sam'd for, as to be obliged to employ Statesmen, drawn from the foggy Air and fenny Soil of *Ireland* and *Holland*? If I might venture my Conjecture, it should be thus: The Noblemen and Grandees of *Spain* have too much Pride, on account of their Rank and Birth, to run through necessary Offices of Subserviency, which are requisite to qualify them for the highest ministerial Trusts; and his present Catholick Majesty has found, in the Course of his Affairs, a greater Call for Merit and Experience than Grandeur and Magnificence, which is the Reason that he has rather chosen such as were fit for, than such as fancied themselves born to such Employments. I think the Moral of this is what ought not to be overlook'd by us; and I dwell upon it the rather, and with more Concern, because we have had lately an unhappy Instance of this kind of Folly: We have seen a young Nobleman, of the greatest Parts, and finest Accomplishments, through this intolerable Pride of Spirit, this over-weaning Opinion of his own Worth, and Disdain of superior Abilities, forfeit his Right to a Country, where his Talents, if he had Patience enough to go through the necessary Gradations, must, in all likelihood, have one Day placed him at the Top of Affairs: But, for want of this, we have seen him reduced to take Refuge among a People, in this ridiculous Particular, of his own Stamp.

But to return to the Duke of *Ripperda*, whatever was the Occasion of his Disgrace we have no reason to be concerned at it; and if it be true that we have been accessory to the displacing of him, I think it is a Stroke of Policy that we are much indebted to our Ministers for,

for, whatever Methods it was brought about by. However earnest the King his Master, or the Marquis his Successor, may be in concerting Measures against our Interest, it is plain and certain, that every such Removal is a Rub in the Way of such Schemes. I say again, it is a great Point gained, nor am I concerned to know how it was done.

— *An dolus, an virtus, quis in hoste requirit?*

To conclude, the great Moral to be drawn from this Accident, is, that all Ministers to Arbitrary Princes ought to walk with the utmost Caution; that in some measure they ought to be just, but that in general they ought to study the Humours of their Masters. It also furnishes one, that may be useful in middling Life; who that hears of the Duke de Ripperda's flying for Protection to the Dutch and English Ministers, whom, not many Months before, he had treated with Contempt and Disregard; and whose Interests, as well as their Masters, his Projects tended to stop and undermine; who, I say, hears this, but learns that we ought to be very cautious of making or provoking Enemies; and that the most contemptible of our Acquaintance may at one time or other in Life, be of Service and Advantage to us.

June 11,
1726.



Of

Of the ENCOURAGEMENT of LEARNING.

THE Neglect which Men of Learning, and Parts meet with from the World, has been a Matter of Complaint in all Ages: so that what our Writers lay to the Charge of this, has nothing singular in it; except it should appear that, amidst the universal Contempt which good Sense and Learning lie under at present, there are *not* to be found some great Names, who endeavour to cherish and support them. If this be not the Case, our Age is in no worse Condition in that respect, than any of those which went before it; in every one of which the Gross of Mankind despis'd and disesteem'd the Endeavours of the Learned to serve them: though we can in every one of them point out a *Few*, who made merit their Care, and whose Smiles and Approbations were, as the Poet says, *worth the Shouts of thousand Amphitheatres*.

The Behaviour of such exalted Beings has a double Effect upon Mankind. It not only supports the great Genius which has the good Fortune to meet with such Patrons, and enables him to produce to the World the Result of those Qualities which for the present sets him above it, and may help for the future to make it better; but also prompts the studious Emulator, born in a distant Age, to aspire to the Accomplishments which procur'd his Predecessor to

to be so distinguish'd ; and this even at a Time when there are no visible Encouragements, no publick Rewards to tempt him ; nothing but the uncertain and precarious Hope, that such a Patron may rise, and that he himself may find him. Thus I may affirm, that the following Letter and its Story is, in the Minds of most Men of Learning, little less than a Balance for the Poverty of Homer, and the Sufferings of Epictetus.

The Great Man who is the Subject of it, had acquired such a Reputation throughout Europe for his Learning and Parts, that the famous Queen of Sweden, who was particularly fond of Merit in that way, sollicited him by repeated Letters to visit her Court. He complied ; and was received with more Friendship and condescending Familiarity, than he might expect from one of his own Rank. 'Tis said, that this Princess was so delighted with his Conversation, that when the Severity of the Weather in that Climate, to which he had not been used, threw him into a slight Indisposition, she would come to his Chamber, and pay him the necessary Attendance of a Nurse during whole Afternoons ; and for her Trouble, thought her self well rewarded by the learned Discourses which his Disease was not violent enough to forbid his making. After some Time, when his Affairs called him from her, she would have purchased his Company at the Expence of Preferments, Pensions, or any thing her Kingdom could afford : But, to be short, he left her, and soon after died ; leaving his Wife a Command to burn all his Papers : which she executed, or at least pretended to have executed in her Letter

to Queen *Christina*; to which the following is an Answer: and what I have said sufficient to serve as a Key to it.

To Madam D E SAUMAISE.

M A D A M,

' F the Death of the great *Salmasius* be at this
' time Matter of Grief to all the reasonable
' World, whose Condolements you receive from
' all Parts upon it; judge what ought to be my
' Sorrow for this irreparable Loss. You know
' how great the Esteem was which I paid to his
' Merit; and you are a Witness, that I had for
' him Sentiments of Affection as sincere and as
' cordial as I could have for a Father. I was
' upon the Point of renewing to him my Pro-
' fessions of them, when the melancholy News
' of his Death made me drop my Pen, and de-
' prived me of all Thought, but my Regret for
' the Loss of a Person who had been so dear to
' me. After this, imagine to your self how shock-
' ing are the Griefs which I have felt! and hope
' not for me, that I shall undertake to comfort
' you. Your Sorrow is just; and you ought to
' employ the rest of your Days in weeping for this
' Loss, and the Sin of Murder which you have
' committed upon his Writings. Was you so
' great an Enemy to your own Glory, and to the
' Memory of the Deceased, that you durst pro-
' fane your Hands with such a Sacrilege? Your
' Obedience is cruel, and I never will forgive
' your having put to Death a second time the
' Man, who of all the World deserved most to
' be immortal. Pardon, I beseech you, this
' Transport; Indignation hurries me away; and
' I can-

‘ I cannot keep myself from reproaching you
‘ with this inestimable Loss, which I would re-
‘ deem at the Expence of an infinite Treasure.
‘ But since Misfortune would give us such am-
‘ ple Reasons for regretting his Death, it is just
‘ that by the Fondness which I express to you
‘ for him, I should clear my self from the Sus-
‘ picion of being but indifferently concerned for
‘ the Glory of this great Man. This is what
‘ remains to be performed, in order to wash my
‘ Hands of the Crime which you have laid up-
‘ on me. But tho’ what you have done has
‘ given me reason to complain of you, yet I shall
‘ always consider you as the Widow of that same
‘ *Salmasus*, whom I loved as a Father, and
‘ whose Memory I shall honour all my Life. I
‘ shall ever remember him; and I shall take care
‘ to shew you and his Children the Friendship
‘ and Esteem which I bore to the dead. It will
‘ only depend upon you to let me know in what
‘ manner I can oblige you; and rest assured that
‘ I will omit nothing for your Satisfaction, pro-
‘ vided you don’t leave me ignorant of the means
‘ by which I may serve you. And for what re-
‘ lates to your Son whom you spoke of to me,
‘ know that I take an Interest in his Education,
‘ and that I expect you shall give me an Account
‘ of it; for I will contribute all that is in my
‘ Power to render him a Son worthy of so great
‘ a Father.

CHRISTINA.

June 25. 1726.



Of DETRACTION.

To &c. —

— *Absentem qui rodit amicum,
Qui non defendit, alio culpante ; solutos
Qui captat risus hominum, famamque dicacis :
Fingere qui non visa potest, commissa tacere.
Qui nequit : hic niger est, hunc tu, Romane, caveto.*
Hor. lib. i. Sat. 4.

S I R,

Detraction is a Vice so detrimental to Society, that I believe you would not be displeased with a Discourse which exposed the Folly and Iniquity of it ; and therefore have I chosen the Lines above as a Text which I intend to comment upon, not as they are a Piece of Classical Learning, but as they are a fine Lesson of Morality.

It is odd that Good and Evil should shift their Sides and Parties, in such a manner as they seem to do : Truth is eternal ; always was, and always will be the same ; and yet so bad is our Taste, or so perverse are our Morals, that what Horace about eighteen hundred Years ago gives for the Character of a Scoundrel, whom no Man ought to converse with, is now become the Definition of a fine Gentleman, or at least, of what we call a pretty Fellow, and a good Companion. Thus we see the Abuse of absent Acquaintance makes up the greatest Part of the Entertainment of

of polite Company in these Days; and the fitter a Man is to discharge himself of that scandalous Office, the more agreeable and entertaining we think him: As for the Defence of the Party rail'd at, no Body will shew his Ignorance of good Breeding so far as to take it up; no Man will be so absurd as to disturb the Mirth of the Company with any impolite Contradiction, tho' his best Friend were the Subject of it: At least, such a Man would be deem'd an ill-bred Clown, and a troublesome Companion for so doing, and perhaps find it difficult for the future to mix in such agreeable and improving Society.

The Man that coolly, seriously, and maliciously traduces another, must have a Soul capable of perpetrating the blackest Villanies: His Guilt is great, while the Mischief he can do is but little, compar'd to that which the merry Scoffer, the Man, who, as *Horace* says, *Captat risus hominum, famamque dicacis*, with some Innocence on his Part, is able to bring about: Fairly arguing, we ought not to suppose the Man, who by his constant good Humour discovers a Philanthropy, and by his continual Cheerfulness a Readiness to be pleased; I say we ought not rashly to suppose that meer Ill-nature set him upon this way of entertaining his Company, but Compliance to Custom, and their Humours; and therefore we ought to acquit him of any malevolent Design, though I think he ought never to forgive himself the ill Consequences which must attend upon his imprudent Fondness for pleasing. The cool Traducer may procure himself Enemies, but none to those he abuses: His Railings recoil upon himself, and we avoid and detest him, rather than the Person

that is the Object of his Malice: But the Man who is in Possession of the Talents of Wit and Humour, is a dangerous Creature; he tickles the malevolent Disposition of our Natures in such a Manner, as we can't refuse to be pleased with; and if the Consequence be that we like him for so doing, we must necessarily hate, or at least despise those who are the Subjects of his Ridicule, though in themselves ever so innocent and unblameable: A worse Mischief is, that we contract the Habit from them; and thus it happens, that one pleasanter and facetious Railer occasions twenty dull and awkward Imitators.

All the latter Part of this Character, as given by the Poet, relates chiefly to those we call Men of Wit and Pleasantry; which shews us the Difference between the Wit of his Age and ours, and I think confirms the Observation I made before, that such Talents do more Execution employed in this Way, than the most malignant Disposition whatever can effect without them. It is only the Man of this Stamp, that from remarking his Friend's InfirmitieS, can forge little Tales, which, because they tally with his Character, and carry Humour and Jest in them, go down glibly in all Companies: None are at the Trouble of examining the Truth of a Circumstance, when it gives them as much Pleasure as it stands, as it could by their being assur'd of its Verity, and more than they could receive from a Proof of its Falshood. It is the very same Spirit that is capable of fishing out little Scandals which have some Foundation in Truth, yet are in a great measure secreted from the Knowledge of the World. The Delight a facetious Man can give, and consequently takes, in the Receipt of such a little

little Piece of secret History, makes him triumph when he has, by an unpardonable Industry, saved his Invention a Labour. A good Name, says the Scripture, is a sweet Ointment; but it is such a one as we have lost the Art of making; we can break the Viol that holds it, without considering our Inability to repair the Loss; and this we can call Wit and Humour, just as the Ladies do the Mischief of their Monkeys: Good God! that a Parcel of reasonable Creatures should spend an Evening at a worse Entertainment than cutting of Throats; then call it Sport, and say, *Whom have we injured?* The Devil is said to take Delight in doing Mischief, because others Miseries occasion a sort of social Extenuation of his own; but if there be any Fiend, who does Injuries which are indifferent to him, or which at best serve only for an Amusement, that is certainly the worst Being of the Creation: Of this Kind is the Scoffer and the Sinner.

I know several, who, to avoid the scandalous Imputation of being Traducers, never fail to praise every one they talk of: Such a Praise defiles those that deserve a better, and is indeed doing the Good an Injury, by confounding them with the Bad. There are some Men, whom to talk well of is wronging the whole Species; and there are others, who, with Fables that may tempt our Ridicule, have good Qualities, which entitle them to the highest Praise and Esteem. It is saying the Truth of the former, and the whole Truth of the latter, by which we ought to prove our good Nature and Understanding; and nothing is more villainous, than by an undistinguishing Drollery, to traduce good and bad

Men alike, except to jumble the good and ill Qualities of particular Men into a Heap, and throw them all, without Exception, into the Jaws of Contempt and Ridicule.

You perceive that the witty Man, or the Pretender to that Character, is the chief Object of my Indignation on this Account: The mere malicious Man is hardly worth regarding; besides, the Laws are almost sufficient to parry his Assaults; and, in that Case, Satyr has no Business to intermeddle. I will conclude this Letter with two Characters, which may serve to illustrate my former Remark: That the facetious Man does Mischief by the Imitations he causes, while the Imitators almost fall into the Condition of the mere Malicious, with this additional Circumstance, That they are in Danger of being ridiculed and despised, as well as hated and detested. *Pamphilus* has Wit, good Humour, and Gaiety: He is generally the Life of the Company he keeps: He has too much Complacency for those present, to make any of them his Butt; yet, because Fuel must be had to keep his Humour alive, he fetches it from their absent Acquaintance; whom, with a Freedom not strictly to be allowed, he sacrifices to the Malignancy of those he is among, of whom *Corvus* is always one. *Corvus* has some Vivacity, much Arrogance, and no Sense: He thinks, however, that the Wit of *Pamphilus* makes a good Figure, and likes it where it is most blameable, that is to say, in the railing Part: This, joined to his natural Insolence of Temper, prompts him, in the Absence of *Pamphilus*, to mimick him in deriding all who are not present, which he does, either in the mutilated Jests of *Pamphilus*, or some

some witless stuff of his own; tho' the Difference between them is, that one cuts clean, the other hacks and hews; the Wit of one is a Razor, while the other uses a Bill-Hook. Yet such is the Vilness of *Corvus*, that if he be called to Account for those Freedoms, he owns the Author, whose Praise he would have usurped. Men are offended at the Jests, as they are spoiled by *Corvus*; tho', perhaps, as they stood originally, even those concerned might be pleased at them. This ought to be a Lesson to *Pampbilus*, to refrain such Familiarities, since he not only makes bad Imitators, but shares in their Disgrace. But I can't conclude without telling *Corvus* a Tale, which he may repeat after me, if he likes it, because many have told it before me. An Ape had, by Chance, snatched a Basket of Wild-Fowl from a Countryman, who was carrying them to the Market, and ran with it to the Top of a neighbouring House, where playing with it, and by degrees uncovering it, first starts out one Bird, then another; at which the Beast was infinitely delighted. In short, by degrees, he let them all out; and then fancying it was the Basket which communicated the volatile Faculty to them, he had a Mind to practise it himself, and accordingly jump'd in: Upon which the Basket, unable to stand by itself, fell down from the Ridge of the House with poor Pug in it, whose Neck was only broke for his Affection.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

JUSTICOLA.

Of

Of NEWS-WRITERS.

THE Curiosity of my Countrymen, as to News and Politicks, has been already the Subject of much Mirth : For this Reason, as well as on Account of some ill Consequences which it has lately produc'd, I will in this Discourse, laying aside the Ridicule which it may produce, animadvert upon it as it is the Parent of Mischief and Inconveniences, not only to the State in general, but to each individual Member of it.

This Thirst of Knowledge is of a very risible Kind: It is increased by the Attempts made to satisfy it; and therefore I must say, that tho' the Appetite in itself should be only ridiculous, yet the supplying of it with Objects, the ministring of Fuel to this kind of Fire, is somewhat worse; it is criminal: The great Numbers of lying and impertinent News-Papers, which were set on Foot to asswage this Curiosity, do but heighten and render it incurable; and I think one may truly say of this Nation, that it is, as to this Point, in an irrecoverable Way, and apply to it as a Motto,

— *Egreditque medendo.*

Holland is I think at present the great Emporium of News for all Europe, and People fancy that one Mark of the Liberty which the Inhabitants enjoy. It is very observable, That they take

take a Licence of telling Lies of their Neighbours, but are very cautious of meddling at Home. Whether this proceeds from Restraint or Choice, from Fear or Prudence, I won't venture to determine; but certain it is, that in a Dutch News-Paper, though fill'd with Advice from all Parts of the World, some true, some false, some forg'd, and some guess-work, you shall never find more than a single Passage or two, nor always so much, from the Town in which it was printed; while we, on the contrary, stuff a great Number of chit-chat Papers with the inconsiderable and idle Adventures of this Metropolis.

If Men would seriously consider that such a Practice did not answer the Ends of either News-writing or News-reading, sure there would not be a Vent for such Trumpery: Instead of meeting with the Recent History and State of neighbouring Nations in such Papers, which is to be sure the only laudable Design they can pretend to, we are entertain'd with private Scandal and obscure Gallantries: Who was divorced for Adultery, or who executed for Felony, is exhibited to the World, instead of Accounts, who broke a League, or who lost a Battle: Call you this Entertainment! For my Part, I think the Advertisements afford more Pleasure, and I am sure they give a more innocent Diversion, because being generally Non-sence, they are to be accounted neither true nor false.

Accounts of Deaths, Marriages, and such like gossiping Tales, concerning People in low or middling Life, are Things merely indifferent to Mankind, if they happen to be true; but if they are false, occasion a World of private Mischief.

Tho'

Tho' we in Town are too well acquainted with the Veracity of our Intelligencers, to lay any great Stress upon what they utter, yet Country-Gentlemen, all Foreigners, and our Fellow-Subjects every where abroad, are liable to be impos'd by them. How often has it happen'd that the Bill or Note of any eminent Merchant, whom our News-writers have put to Death in their Papers, has been refused or protested abroad, perhaps to his or his Correspondents great Damage, perhaps to their utter Ruin, before the recanting Paragraph, the scandalous Method they have found of making Réparation, and furbishing a new Article, can come to the Parts in which he traded. Thus shall a News-writer, with a Dash of his Pen, do more Mischief to a Nation in one Paper, than the Stamp-Duty of it, while it lasts, can attone for. I believe those Gentlemen are not generally aware how far they are punishable for this, and therefore I take the Opportunity of informing them, that reporting the Death of a Man in Busines, if it should happen to be false, bears a heavier Action at Law than any Scandal they can publish of him.

By the Publication of Marriages what cruel Disappointments are occasioned? What sinister Designs furthered? By those Articles which the inquisitive Diligence of the News-gatherer has found out, it's odds but some deserving Person may lose a Fortune, or some loving Couple their future Happiness, by the Interposition of Friends, whom the anticipated Rumour has awaken'd: By those which are sent and paid for, 'tis a Chance that some modest Woman is obliged to throw herself away on a Scoundrel, who, by the Fiction of such a Tale, has obliged her to un-

undergo half the Shame she was afraid of, and therefore she marries him to avoid the rest; at least, it is often done with a malicious Intent to disturb friendly and social Conversation, where no such Design was thought of, and alarmed Persons who were in no Danger.

We have a strange Way of judging in these Affairs, as indeed we generally have in most others: Every Man would know his Neighbour's Secrets; and yet every Man would conceal his own. If we observ'd, in this seemingly trivial Matter, the great golden Rule of Morality, idle Men would not find Encouragement to abuse us at this rate, and much important Mischiefs would be prevented, which arise from these trifling Causes, like large Rivers from the smallest Springs.

If, I say, we could tame this great Lust of knowing our Neighbours Business, it would be worth no Body's while to pry about, like Spies, for Intelligence to publish; to run their Noses into every Crowd, every Court, every Office, and every Place of Resort; and from thence carry away what is not decent or fit to be made publick, but what is safe in their Opinion. We have frequently seen Passages in Print, from which our Enemies might reap Advantage in their Wars, or other Dealings with us; but that properly falls under the Government's Correction, as I think some other Things ought, that are permitted, at least not disturbed in this Way. It is not many Years since an impertinent News-writer, after peeping into the Entry Book at the Custom-house, published an Account of a great Number of Moidores, imported from *Portugal* in a certain Ship, and for certain Uses, and

and by the Contrivance of a certain *English Merchant* then in *Lisbon*, whom immediately, upon the Arrival of that News-Paper, the jealous *Portuguese*, never sticking at the Weakness of the Evidence, seized, imprisoned, and would have put to Death, but that fortunately some of our Men of War, who happened to be there, insisted upon his Delivery; and he was accordingly surrender'd, through Dread of the *British Cannon*, or else his useful Life must have been made the Victim of an idle Curiosity, and perhaps the Honour of our Country so far concerned, as to reduce us to this Dilemma, either tamely to suffer such an Injury, or by engaging in an expensive War, which might have doubtful Consequences, incur the total Loss of a beneficial Trade to *Portugal*.

From what has been here said, we may draw this Inference; That either the present Set of News-writers ought to be very cautious in what they write, or their Employers in whom they put to work. In *Holland* the Papers, which give such universal Pleasure, are all written by Scholars, and Men of Parts, at least by such as are conversant in what they write upon; while here the Management of such Things are trusted to such little ignorant Creatures, as neither know what they do, nor care what Mischiefs they may do; so that if Matters go on in this Way, it is not unlikely, nor would it be unwelcome, that the Government should lay an Inhibition upon them: And for my Part, I should never consider the curtailing a Power to do Mischief, as any Abridgment of the Liberties of my Country.

July 30, 1726.

Of

Of the new ORATORY.

THE Emptiness of the Town, the Absence of the Court, the Silence of the Theatres, and the absolute Cessation of all other publick Diversions, have conspired with the honest Endeavours of Mr. Henley to make the Restorer of the *antient Elocution, and the Institutor of the Oratory*, not only the Entertainment of many, but the Theme of most, whom Business or Idleness detain amidst Smoke and Politicks, this long Vacation.

He is almost the Subject of every Conversation, and various and whimsical are the Discourses to which he administers Matter: The Learned and the Ignorant, the Infidel and the Religio-nist, the Orthodox and the Schismatical, all talk of him, as a Separatist from every one of their Communions; and yet as a Creature who goes astray, in a Manner so entirely new, that they are at a Loss in what Category to place him, or what Kind of Scholar, Heretick, or Enthusiast, they may most properly name him. I was in a Company the other Day, where a very great Stickler for the Church apprehended a new Danger to it from the Appearance of this Impostor, as he was pleased to call him: He utter'd many Invectives against Heresy and Innovations in Religion, and concluded them with an En-thusiastick Conjecture, of which he did not see much Reason to doubt, that this *Henley* was the Antichrist mentioned in the Scriptures, and that
con-

consequently the End of the World was at Hand.—Here he was interrupted by another, no less zealous, but a little more scrupulous, who, upon comparing the *Institutor's* Character, with that described in the Text, which he had by Heart, pronounc'd that he could not be the Person foretold, since it did not appear that he had the Gift of working Miracles. A third, who sat by, and had Sense enough to perceive how ridiculous this Dispute was like to grow, was resolved to improve the Joke, by perplexing the Question, and addressing himself gravely to the Disputants, said, “That he was afraid
“ that last Argument was not so weighty and
“ conclusive as it might seem to be: For this
“ Impostor, added he, does (as it were) work
“ Miracles already: You observe how difficult
“ it is for the establish'd Pastors to procure
“ Hearers, who are at no Expence for their In-
“ structions, while this Man so bewitches the
“ People, that they not only run mad after his
“ Abominations, but present him their Money for
“ performing them: To give Money for seeing
“ an Opera, or a Puppet-Shew, a Prize-Fight, or
“ a Tragedy, a Cock-Match, or a Concerto,
“ is nothing at all strange; but believe me,
“ Friends, to give Money for hearing a Ser-
“ mon, is little less than a Miracle in this pro-
“ fane Age.” This Discourse, though pro-
nounced with a good deal of Gravity, had not
the Effect intended; for as he deliver'd it, I,
who have not the most absolute Command of
my Muscles when I smell a Jest in the Wind,
unfortunately smiled, which his Antagonists,
who had no good Opinion of the Orthodoxy of
either, interpreted for the Sign of a Conspiracy
between

between us, and therefore abruptly quitted the Point in Debate, tho' it was impossible they could drop the Subject entirely; for presently, with all the Vehemence of Zeal, they began to accuse *the Institutor* of vile scandalous Simony, in exposing holy Things to sale, and basely extorting Money from such as were willing to hear his Doctrine. To this they added their Hopes that a Prosecution would be commenced against him for such Misdoings, and that the Government would interest themselves in it, to shew a proper Regard to the Church. To this my Friend answer'd, with the same Gravity as before, but more in Earnest, " That he should be sorry to see the Laws stretch'd for the sake of ruining a poor Man, whose greatest Crime is, that he is one of the Multitude of Persons who followed Christ rather for the *Loaves* than the *Lessons*; that his Prices were reasonable enough; and that no Body ought to complain, since he did not exact for his Maintenance so much as the *twentieth* Part of his Disciples Substance." He closed his Speech with a sober Smile, and this Sentence, " That Monopolies ought no more to be encouraged in Religion than in Trade." I suppose I need not add that this ended the Dispute, by dividing the Company, since none that are truly Orthodox can think the Air wholesome which is breath'd in by People of opposite Sentiments.

I was Witness to another odd Dispute between some People, whose natural Impertinence was help'd out by a little Grammatical Knowledge; and between them the important Question was, Whether the Followers of this new

Religion (for it is currently called so) should be named *Henleites*, *Henleites*, or *Henleyans*: But this Point, material as it is, I don't find can be settled to this Day.

So much Conversation as I have known roll upon this Man, alarm'd my Curiosity, and provoked me to enquire whether he was really so dangerous or important a Creature as he is represented. I was directed first to read his Liturgy, but I chose to hear him in his academical Capacity (as he phrases it) before I enquired into his Divinity, and that has saved me the Trouble of perusing his Rhapsody of Prayers; for, upon hearing his Harangue, and conversing a little with him afterwards, I will venture to pronounce him an undesigning, harmless Man, of tollerable good Understanding, unwilling, and I hope unable, to do any Injury either to our Religion or our Constitution; and I dare almost prophesy, that, except Persecution should make him, or some of his Followers, Enthusiasts, the next Age will be at no Loss by what Name to distinguish them.

I told you I was to hear one of his academical Lectures: It was on *Wednesday* the 27th of last Month: There I found an elegant and polite Assembly waiting for his Instructions: The Subject of his Discourse was Action, as it is a Concomitant of Eloquence; and he had the Pleasure of seeing among his Audience such Men as may one Day gladden the Hearts of both Houses by the Practice of his Rules. But what amazed me, was a Parcel of Female Disciples, who listened with great Attention, and seemed to depart very much pleased and improved by the Instructions of the Orator. Now, though I apprehend

hend no Danger or Influence from his religious Discourses upon the Minds of the People, yet I must agree with those who think it may produce ill Consequences to teach the Ladies Eloquence; besides, I apprehend it to be a Work superfluous and unnecessary; nor do I see one Argument in its Favour, but this: It is urged that he teaches Elocution after the antient Manner, which will, at least, alter the Method from what the Fair Ones now practise; and who knows but such an Alteration may be for the better? Ay, but who can say it will? I am against making Experiments that may be fatal to us; we know, in some measure, how to deal with Female Eloquence according to the Moderns, but should they top the Antients upon us, Lord, deliver us! It must, no doubt, be a very comfortable Reflection to the Heart of every honest Bachelor, to think, that if the Ladies thus frequent Mr. Henley's School, he may one Night have the Pleasure of hearing a Curtain Lecture, delivered according to the Directions laid down by *Tully* and *Quintilian*.

August 6, 1726.





Of PRIZE-FIGHTING.

To &c.

SIR,

IT is with Surprize I perceive that the ancient and laudable Art of Prize-fighting has escap'd the Panegyrick of all our modern Brethren; and I confess my Want of Power to stifle my Indignation, while I observe the noble Science of Defence so overlook'd by those whose Duty and Interest it ought to be to record the Glories of their Contemporaries, I mean the profound Journalists of the present Age.

I own I had it frequently in my Inclinations to celebrate the Merits of the gallant Fraternity of the Blade, but was deterred by my Despair of equalling the ingenious Mr. *Byron*, whose Ode upon this Subject will ever be remember'd to their Glory, and his; and nothing could have perswaded me to attempt the Theme but an After-thought, to wit, that as I only write in Prose, the Danger of the Comparison may be avoided: The Man who walks a-foot will be consider'd by himself, and never examined by, nor compared to him who keeps his Chariot; though, if he should pretend to a curule Equitation, his Horses, Coach, Painting, Liveries, and Servants, are all set in Opposition to his Brother Beaus, and he must expect his Character from the Result of that Examination.

This

This Art, than which none is, for its Antiquity, more illustrious, had long left the Stage, and been buried in Obscurity; while its Place in the World was usurp'd by a mischievous younger Brother of the same Family, but unworthy of the Name: Long had the noble Back-Sword and St. George's Guard left the polite World, and given way to the paltry single Rapier, and Quart, and Tierce; till the publick-spirited Mr. Figg, out of meer Fondness for Antiquity, has lately undertook the *Restoring of the antient Gladiatory of the Stage*, and for that End has erected a *Gymnasium*, in which he instructs the young Gentlemen of this Age in the Weapons of their Ancestors. Happy Omen of the Revival of the Valour of their Ancestors! When our antient Way of Fighting is restored, well may we hope our antient Success! Then new Guys and new Georges shall arise, and new Cows be slaughter'd, and new Dragons demolish'd! Thrice happy present Age so fruitful in *Revivals*! now blest by the Restoration of two long-lost useful Arts, Elocution and Cudgel-playing! No more let it be said *cedant arma togæ*; but let our Revivors walk hand in hand to Fame, and be transmitted with equal Glory to Posterity! Let our Hero defend our Orator from Thumps, Thwacks, and Bangings; and let our Orator secure our Hero from Scorn, Calumny, and Revilings! Observe we another Instance of their Parity, in the Condition from which their several Sciences have been rescued: Oratory, upon its Banishment from the Pulpit, was forced to take Refuge in Booths and Play-houses, among Quacks, Mountebanks, Players, Dancers, and Tumblers; and Gladiatory, when it was driven

from Court, fled for Shelter to the Bear-Gardens and publick Streets : Porters, Apprentices, Pick-Pockets, nay even Taylors, those Usurpers of Man's Name, professed it ; yet now Things have taken such a Turn, that I have seen a Member of the House of Commons gaping at a Lesson of Mr. Henley's ; and one of the other House condescending to take an instructive Knock of the Pate from Mr. Figg ; nor am I without Hopes that I shall live to see a Kennel of Hounds called together by the Rules of a Declamation, and a Punctilio of Honour decided by the Laws of Back-Sword.

But to drop this Comparison, which my Readers will perceive was only a Digression, let us take a View of the magnanimous Behaviour of our Gladiators in Adversity, and from thence judge if they are not worthy of this Turn in their Favour, and their Art entitled to the Admiration and Practice of our noble Youth, whose Fineness of Taste prompts them to pursue this agreeable Study. The gallant Actions of *Robin Hood*, his great Sufferings, and his Excellence at Quarter-Staff, which is a Branch of the noble Science, are too well known to need a Repetition here : The Courage and Conduct of old *Jack Falstaffe*, who, by his Manner of bearing his Point, we may learn to have practised this Art ; and the great Successes and famous Exploits of the late Hero little *Gorman*, whose Renown stands pickled for the Use of Posterity in the preserving Salt of modern Satyr ;

*and if these Scenes misarry,
Let Gorman take the Stage.*

*Prologue to the Jew of Venice.
and*

and who, for all his Bravery and Glory, was, to the eternal Disgrace of our Laws, hang'd like a common Thief, for only taking the Freedom with some of his Neighbours to borrow a Horse. Add to these the great Numbers of gallant Souls still in being, whom Thirst of Fame sends, in Imitation of those antient Prize-Fighters *Hercules, Theseus, &c.* traversing the Globe in search of Victory and Bread and Cheese.

Whoever has been conversant in Romances, must observe a great Resemblance between the Behaviour of Knights Errant and strolling Gladiators; but whoever peruses the Challenges and Despatches, which are to be met with in such Books, and compares them with the Records of Figg's Amphitheatre, and the Hockley Bear-Garden, must still find it greater. I cannot let slip this Opportunity, without offering my Praises and Thanks to the sublime Penners of these Compositions, by what Name or Title soever distinguish'd: Happy Genius's! Inventors of a Style, which, without fettering Words with Sense or Meaning, makes a sonorous rumbling Noise, exactly calculated to raise the Courage of the Combatants.

*Like the Trumpet and the Drum,
Which make the Warrior's Stomach come,
And sharpen Valour, like Small Beer
By Thunder turn'd to Vinegar.*

I hope whoever is the present Secretary may be immortal as his Works; but if there should happen to be a Vacancy in that high Office, I would beg leave to recommend to it my very good Friend the Author of *Bufiris*, whom I think every way qualified for so important a Trust;

but if the Brotherhood should imagine, upon reading his Play, that his Excellence in the Sublime-obscure is not sufficient, I can assure them that some of his Prose-performances are able to atone for that Want, by a Mastery in the Flat-unintelligible. I hope my Services to the Science will give me so much Interest amongst them, as will make me able to obtain this Favour; that I may comfort myself for the future in Possession of a Character which I always aspired to, that of a proportionate Rewarder of Merit.

I had like to have concluded without observing, for the Honour of Prize-Fighting, that it has been so much encouraged by our Laws; as to have been formerly a Method not only of deciding Honour, but Life and Property: In these Cases I meet with but two Methods of Fighting appointed by Law; the one, when two Persons drubb'd one another heartily with Bags fill'd with Sand; and the other, when they used Battoons, as I find them called; I own I am much puzzled by that ingenious Diversion with Sand-Bags, being out of Use at *Hockey in the Hole*; but I have written a Treatise in Folio, which shall appear in due Time, proving, against Selden, and all others, for the Honour of Prize-Fighting, that the Battoons were no other than the modern Quarter-Staves, or at least the Origin of them; and I give this timely Notice, that all Friends and Encouragers of the noble Science may be prepar'd to forward my Undertaking with their seasonable Subscriptions.

August 20,

1746.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

Of

Of COMMENTATORS.

TIS a Debt which the World owes to those who have deserved well of it, to preserve their Reputations as long as the Materials of which they are formed can be made to last. To this kind of Reward I think no sort of Men better intitled than the Poets; whether we consider them as seldom receiving any other, or as they really are Benefactors in a very high degree to Mankind. This is in a great measure confess'd by the Practice of other Countries towards the Memory of such as have excell'd among them, and by the Consent of all Nations in their Admiration and Applause of the *Ancients*. We are the only People in *Europe* who have had good Poets among them, and yet suffer their Reputation to moulder, and their Memory as it were to rust, for want of a little of that *Critical Care*, which is as truly due to their Merit, as to that of the antient *Greek* and *Roman* Writers.

It is easy to perceive what I aim at; to observe that some tolerable Comments upon the Works of our celebrated Poets are not only expedient but necessary. Every Writer is obliged to make himself understood of the Age in which he lives; but as he cannot answer for the Changes of Manners and Language which may happen after his Death, those who receive Pleasure and Instruction from him are obliged, as well in Gratitude to him as in Duty to Posterity, to endeavour

endeavour to perpetuate his Memory, by preserving his Meaning. This is what the French have done by their *Marots*, *Rabelais's* and *Ronsards*; nay, even *Boileau*, who died within our Memory, is thus arm'd against the Assaults of Time. The *Italians*, who are not thereto provoked by a changing Language like ours, have not a tolerable Writer in their Tongue whose Works are not illustrated by some useful Notes; while we, whose Manners are so variable, and whose Language so visibly alters every Century, have not one Poet (tho' there are several whom we admire) who has met with the good Fortune of a kind Hand endeavouring to secure him against Mortality. Strange Humour! Much Pains have been taken to preserve to us the Picture of *Chaucer*, while no body has thought it proper to render that better Picture of him, his Writings, intelligible to future Ages. *Barker* has had a Monument erected to his Memory in *Westminster-Abby*; how much more emphatically might it be said to be erected to his Memory, if it were a Comment upon his excellent *Histoires*: Which, for want of such Illustration, grows every Day less pleasing to his Readers, who lose half his Wit and Pleasantry, while they are ignorant of the Facts he alludes to. I own, it grows daily more difficult to perform this Duty to old Authors; and therefore the *Italians* say, that a Comment ought to be made when the Work does not need it; For that it will be impossible to make one when it does.

But it has been common among us, thro' a false Deliciaey, to condemn and deprecate this kind of Criticism. Pedant and Commentator have been hitherto considered as Terms synonymous;

Weak

Weak and idle Cavilling! If it be the Poet's justest Boast to confer eternal Praise upon Heroes, or such as are the worthy Subjects of their Lays, it is no less meritorious in the Critick who preserves the Writings of these Poets, and by a grateful Retribution gives them Immortality in their Turn.

For my Part, I think the Writings of such great Men as have done Honour to the Nation they lived in, ought to be kept and regarded with the same Care as is usually taken in preserving the Works of a great Master, either in Painting or Sculptrure. Accidental Fractures, or incommodious Air, ate the Mischiefs which threaten the Materials of those Pieces, and therefore, with all Diligence, to be avoided; incorrect Editions and bad Glosses, are the same Enemies to Works of Wit, and therefore equally to be guarded against: And tho' it often happens that a main'd Statue, or a Fragment of a Poem, becomes better lik'd, and is of more Value, than perhaps the entire Piece would be; yet the Regret which Men feel for what they imagine they have lost, makes all that sort of Pleasure imperfect, especially if it be the Work of a great Master, in which to have the most minute or trifling Part defac'd or obscur'd, is to his Admirers an irreparable Misfortune. This Opinion is confess'd by all Countries, in the Care they take about the Writings of their great Genius's, and has been as good as allow'd at home. Since we can remember to have seen two of the most ingénious Men of our Age, at least nominally employ'd in preserving Shakespear from the Rust of Time; tho' their Success in it is a Proof that they either wanted Capacity, or did not lay it out

out upon this Task ; and that the greatest Genius is not always qualified for the best Commentator. To suppose that the greatest Poet in this Age is the only fit, or fittest Person, to revise the Sheets, and correct the Press, when the greatest Poet of the last is new published, is every whit as whimsical and absurd, as to imagine that no body but the best Sculptor living is proper to dig the Ground under which lie bury'd the Remains of the best antique Statues.

I have been thrown into these Thoughts, by comparing a Book lately published call'd *Shakespear Restored*, with the late Edition of that Poet set forth by Mr. *Pope*; in the former what Diligence and Accuracy is to be found, in the latter what Carelessness and Ignorance. Till I read *Pope's* Work I hardly thought *Shakespear* wanted a Commentator ; till I read *Theobald's*, I scarcely believ'd he would ever find a good one; I heartily wish for the Delight of the present Age, for the Instruction of Posterity, and for the Honour of the Author, that we may see an Edition of *Shakespear* come from that able Hand; or if he is to be prohibited that Task, that he would transfer his Care to the Preservation of some other of our old Bards, as there are some of them who stand in need of such a Prop to their decaying Fame. And it must be observed, that such a Critick as this might bring the Name of a Commentator into the Repute which it has lost by the dull and useless Pedantry of some Pretenders to it. Such a Gentleman, and none but such, ought to republish an old Writer, since it is in his Power to make Reprisals upon his *Author*, and to receive as much Glory from him as he gives to him.

Sept. 3, 1726.



A N O V E L.

To Sc.

S I R,

FABLE has been always reckon'd among the principal Arts of Instruction. The Method of conveying Lessons of Practice through this delightful Conduit, as it began almost with the World, so is it like to continue in Esteem till the End of it. I am of opinion that you approve of this Way; and therefore venture to recommend to you the following Story: which, I think, has all the Advantages of a Fable, tho' I am assured it is in all its Circumstances a Truth.

NOT many Miles Westward of this great Metropolis, lived some Years ago an elderly Gentleman, of an ample Fortune, a sound Mind, and as much good Humour as we ever find attending upon Fifty Six. Let us call him *Pamphilus*, and his young Wife *Sabina*. She was the Daughter of a neighbouring Gentleman, blest with all the Advantages of Youth, Beauty, and Education; she had so many good Qualities, that he look'd upon her as the Gift of Heaven, and the Reward of a former Life well spent; he consider'd her as his Guide and Assistant through the latter Part of his Pilgrimage, and hop'd by her to be laid down quietly at the End of it. Jealousy, the common Infirmity of Old Men,

Men, never got Entertainment in his Thought, what thro' the Decency of her Behaviour, what thro' the Strength of his Understanding.

To add to this Happiness, he had within half a Mile a Neighbour, who agreed with him in Age, Inclination, and Understanding. They had been Friends and School-fellows, had ran thro' the World together, and now were equally sensible of the Benefits and Advantages of a retir'd Life. This Friend, who was a Widower, had an only Son, just return'd from making the Tour of Europe, which he had undertaken after finishing his Studies at Leyden. *Leander* (for so we will call him) became presently the Delight of *Pamphilus*; and indeed, the Young Man's Accomplishments very well justified the Old one's Approbation. *Leander* was a Man of great Parts; he had a ready Wit, a good Memory, and a smooth Elocution; great Embellishments these, to that Learning and Observation which he had acquir'd from his Studies and Travels: He had, besides, more Virtues than are generally thought consistent with the Warmth of Youth; he was modest, sober, moral, and religious. All these good Qualities so indear'd him to the Old Gentleman, that he could hardly bear his Absence; and as he saw himself in no likelihood of leaving Children of his own, he presently determin'd that *Leander* should succeed him in his Estate, which was considerable. *Leander's* Gratitude, as well as Interest, oblig'd him to be very observant of *Pamphilus*, and to study the Means of pleasing him: In order to this, he must be continually at his House; where he enter'd into several innocent Conversations with *Sabina*, whom he had been acquainted with from her Infancy.

There

There is a Charm in the Conversation of a Woman of good Sense, which engages us in an uncommon Manner, even while we are sure we have no Design upon her Beauty: This *Leander* felt; he lik'd above all things the Discourses of *Sabina*, tho' his own Modesty, as well as his Regard for *Pamphilus*, would never admit him to think of attacking her Virtue. To be short, he guarded himself against Love, but could not, thro' a frequent Converse, help distinguishing her from other Women by a Liking; or, if you please, he entertain'd the strictest Friendship for her. What her real Thoughts were he knew not; for as she never made Advances towards Love, so she never refused the Friendship he offer'd, but seem'd perfectly satisfied with it; insomuch, that one Day, after a good deal of innocent Chat upon sundry Subjects, he ventur'd to ask her how she intended to dispose of herself after the Death of *Pamphilus*, whom she was in all likelihood to survive? She fetching a Sigh, answer'd, that "she hop'd never to see that Day; but if her ill Stars should bring it about, she thought no body so deserving her Person and Fortune as *Leander*, if he thought them worth his Acceptance."

This was a Compliment that surprised him; but upon Recollection (as he was conscious of his own Virtue) he saw no harm in receiving it. He express'd his Gratitude for the Prejudice in his Favour, and gave her to understand he would expect her Promise. Upon which she presently renew'd it with a most solemn Oath; which she also obliged him to give her, that he would accept of her; and further, that he would not till that Day came, either contract Marriage, or

or other Familiarity with any Woman whatso-
ever.

During the Time that was necessary to compleat this, to be sure a great many harmless Freedoms and innocent Familiarities must have passed between this Pair of Friends; which however the censorious World did not suffer to go un-commented upon: They join'd together the Ideas of *Pampphilus's* Age and *Sabina's* Youth; to which they added, those of *Leander's* Merit, and his frequent Acces to her; and from all these sprung a Scandal, that to the undiscerning Neighbourhood seemed to want no better Evidence. *Leander's* Father was the first of the two Families that heard of it: Immediately upon which he sent for his Son; demanded with what Truth it was asserted, that he had defiled the Bed of *Pampphilus*? The Answer was such as satisfied him of his Son's and *Sabina's* Innocence; but, how-ever, to prevent the Mischief which Rumour might occasion, he charged him upon his Blessing, no more to frequent the House of *Pampphilus*, but either to repair to *London*, or if he liked Retirement better, to some distant Part of the Country.

Leander obey'd: He came to *London*, where almost every Week he received Complaints of his Absence from *Pampphilus*, and fresh Invitations to repeat his Visits; to which he always returned in Excuse the Negotiations which detained him; but never promis'd any thing. He had not been more than six Months in Town, when by Accident he met in the Street a Girl, who had formerly been Maid to *Sabina*, but now as it appears was discarded: He could not neglect this Opportunity of learning News from the

the Family, in which he had such an Interest; so took the Girl into the next Tavern: where, after she had answer'd him all his Questions, whether through Spite to her Mistress, or Affection to him, is not material; she went on in this manner: "I am sorry, Sir, to find you talk so well of my Lady, who I assure you deserves it not from you. I know the old Gentleman loves and regards you as a Man of Merit, as my Lady pretended to do in Complaisance to him; I know how far your Familiarity with her proceeded, and know you undid yourself by proceeding no farther. You remember the young Gentleman whom you introduced into the Acquaintance of that Family; I think you said he had been your Fellow-Traveller and Fellow-Collegian; that Gentleman was wiser; he had the Substance, you but the Shadow, of my Lady's Affections. In short, you grew latterly too like a Spy upon her, when she had other Business to mind; therefore was the Slander rais'd by my Means, but by my Lady's Order: It had the Effect desired, though not in the Way she proposed; what was your own Act, she hoped would be her Husband's Orders. But now all's well. You may make what use of this you please, for I know nothing which binds me to keep the Secret." Although he could not afford any great degree of Credit to this Narration, yet it is not easy to imagine the Distraught and Distraction it gave his Thoughts. He spent some Days in this restless Condition, when he receiv'd a Letter from old *Pamphilus*, complaining of his Absence, inviting him a-new, and requesting earnestly to see him, though in the

most private manner, and for the shortest Time possible; for that he was going to make a Disposition of his Estate, in which *Leander* was nearly concerned. *Leander*, tho' he had the strictest regard to all his Father's Commands, yet upon this Occasion, to oblige the old Gentleman, and give a Turn to the Anxiety of his own Thoughts, he resolved to trespass a little upon them; and therefore writ to *Pampillus*, that on a certain Evening he would wait on him at the Back-Gate of his House, and spend the Remainder of the Night there, provided his coming might be a Secret to every one but the Servant who bore this Message. This was agreed to. He came, was privately let in, and received by the Old Man with all the Fondness and Endearments of a Parent; to whom he presently confess'd the true Reasons of his absenting himself, enforced by his Father's Commands, which *Pampillus* entirely approved of; and after much pleasing Conversation and proper Refreshments, conducted him to an Apartment, from whence, as it was agreed, he might most conveniently get out before the Servants or Family were stirring. Thus disposed of, he found no Inclination to sleep; and being near the Chamber which *Sabina* used on those Nights in which she lay apart from her Husband, and knowing this to be one of those Nights, he resolved with himself to see her for the last Time, as well to give her his Reasons for Absence, as to advertise her of the Injury done her by her Servant, which the Tenderness he had for her determined him to do. He left his Chamber in order to put his Resolution in act; he trod softly till he came to her Door; and there listening to learn if she was in Bed

Bed or asleep, for in that case he purposed not to disturb her, to his great Surprize he heard two distinct Voices come from her Bed, and presently by a closer Attention perceived hers and that of his Friend, whom the Chamber-maid had mentioned. He governed his Rage, till he heard Words of such a tender Import as left him no room for doubt; in fine, he heard and was convinced of more than is proper to be described: He ran to his Room for his Sword, with a full Intent to be revenged on both the deceitful Mistress and the false Friend; but by the time that he had grop'd it out (for he had put out the Light before) Reflection caught hold of him, and in a little time shewed him the fatal Consequences of such a Resolution. Now was his Peace blown up; Sleep was not to be thought of; he spent the Remainder of the Night in traversing the Chamber with a Mind full of Anxiety, and at the first glimmering of Light stole away and came to *London*; where, by reflecting on the Vows he had made, the Condition he was bound to of never marrying or knowing any other Woman, the absolute Promise of making her his Wife whose Falshood he knew; and a latent Tenderness he still had for her; he fell into a high Fever, which was soon attended by such a Delirium, as made his Friends give over all Hopes of his Recovery. However, by the Skill and Care of his Physicians, he at length got through it; and as soon as he was tolerably well, acquainted his Father with a Resolution he had taken of going again to Travel, but concealed from him a firm but secret Intent never to return. His Father consented; and after all Things were prepared, showed him the Fitness

of taking Leave of *Pampillus* and his Family, which he tho' unwillingly submitted to. His Father and he went and dined there, and during the Presence of *Sabina* a visible Sadness sat upon his Face; which was attributed to Sorrow for parting. The Old Man blessed him, and showed him all the Marks of Readiness imaginable at taking Leave: But nothing was equal to *Sabina's* Behaviour; she hung upon his Neck, wept in his Bosom, wrung her Hands, and tore her Hair. To all which he made no other Answer, than by sliding a Bit of Paper into her Hand; which as soon as he was gone she opened, and found to contain a Relation of all their Vows and Fondness, and a full Discovery of her Treachery, with a proper Resentment of it, which was the Cause of his Travelling, and his Resolution never to return. The Evidence he gave was so strong, and his Resentment so forcibly expressed, that, added to her own Consciousness, it drove her into a most desperate Frenzy; of which in a few Days she died: at which time the Paper was found, and Letters dispatched after *Leander*, who had not yet got to *Gravesend*, with the News. Upon which he returned, was kindly received by *Pampillus*; who, in Admiration of his noble Disposition, resolved no more to marry, but presently settled the whole Estate upon him; which he enjoys at this Day, and is now a venerable Old Gentleman, enriched with a Number of Grand-children, from one of whom I had this Story.

O^{cto}b. 29. 1726

Yours, &c.

Of

Of the FRAUDS of BOOK-SELLERS.

I Lately met with a scandalous Advertisement in one of the *Evening Papers*, which gave me no small Offence. It was, as near as I can remember, to this Effect: *Just published, Cases of Impotence and Divorce, in Six Volumes, by Sir Clement Wragg, Knt. late Solicitor-General.* Such an Insult upon the Memory of the Dead, ought never to be forgiven by the Community of which he was a Member. What avails it to a Man's Fame, to have had Virtue, Learning, and Parts, in his Life; if, as soon as he hath left the World, it shall be in the Power of an abandon'd Man to blast his Reputation by a Trick like this; to make a Person possess'd of the most excellent Qualities, pass for the Author of an impertinent Work, which no good Man would read, and none but a bad Man could write? I heartily hope, that Sir Clement's Relations will make his Memory such Reparation, as the Laws in the Punishment of the Offender can afford; or if They should neglect it, I think the Publick ought to undertake it: for it is a common Cause. Several Gentlemen have been already treated in the same Manner, by such Outlaws to Virtue and good Sense; and no one knows whose Turn it may be next.

It was led by this into some Reflections upon Booksellers of this Stamp, and the various Methods

thods they have of imposing upon the Town. Mr. *Locke* was wont to say, "That he never could resist the Force of a Title-Page artfully drawn up; and that he had been led into the reading of an infinite Number of bad Books, by the specious Appearance of the Front." I am sure, the Man that is not well acquainted with the Artifice, must have very little natural Curiosity, who can restrain himself from throwing away his Time and his Money upon the Variety of ingenious Entertainments, which our Prints inform him he may find at the Shops of certain Book-sellers.

Selling one and the same Book under great Variety of Titles, is a Deceit so well known, that it is almost exploded; and those Traders, who find themselves under the Necessity of printing a new Title-Page to put off Waste-Paper, very rarely now-a-days make any other Alteration in it, than by adding Two or Three unmeaning Words, which the Town is to take for the Marks of a *Second*, or *Third Edition*, with Corrections and Amendments, or Additions and Enlargements: But Men must at once be very fond of Learning, and exceedingly ignorant of it, if such Practices can succeed.

Another Artifice, often practis'd, is the publishing Books under a false Name. Those who are guilty of it judge, that an Author's Name is a great Embellishment to a Title-Page. Our Customers, say they, will conclude the Book worth nothing, if no body owns it; and so presently a fictitious Name, or an imaginary Title, is introduced. Thus the most inconsiderable Writer shall either become another Person; or be himself dignify'd with the Title of a *Knight*,

a Captain, or at least a Squire. But the more frequent Fraud is, to invent the Name, as well as the Dignity, of the Writer; and there are now Numbers of Authors, possess'd of a good Share of Fame, read with Pleasure, and wonderfully thought of by several courteous Readers, who have not so much as a Being in *Rerum Naturâ*. A good Hint this, to the real Authors who pant so greedily after Glory. Let them consider, that a bare Name, in which they will after Death be as little concerned as if they had never wore it, is all that can receive those Honours which they hope to reap from their Works.

This Practice, if it went no farther than the Fiction of a Name, or the Invention of a Character, would be only foolish and idle; but as it is carry'd on, it becomes bad and immoral. How often are the Works of such Anonymous Authors of no Merit, ascribed to some Dead Men of Reputation? An Injury both to the Writer and the Reader. How often imposed upon the World, as the Productions of some Living Gentlemen, whose Fame is universally allowed? What a Burden of such Stuff does the celebrated Doctor SWIFT's Name labour under? By the Number of their Writings, there ought to be at least Three MR. POPE's; and for MR. GAY, they have hatch'd a Kinsman and a Namesake, from whom he cannot defend himself. JOHN and JOSEPH不幸ly beginning with the same two Letters, the judicious Bookseller puts them down, and adds GAY to them. Thus the real Poet is unhappily toiling hard to raise a Reputation, which the Phantom is pulling down as fast. I say *Phantom*; for tho' MR. JOSEPH GAY be a very voluminous Author, yet no one living

can bring any manner of Proof that there is or ever was any such Writer really in being.

But the *News-Papers* are the Places where we meet with the most pompous Parade of Invention, by way of *Advertisement*. Certain it is, that the great Extent and Fullness of this City, render it impossible for any Thing to be publickly and thoroughly known, but in this Manner ; and therefore our Papers are often so crowded with these publick Notices, that several of them escape the most discerning Eye. Numberless Methods are invented by our ingenious *Advertisers*, to preserve their Labours from this Obscurity; but the Booksellers, of whom I am talking, seem to have it most in their Power. A *Greek Motto* attracts the Eye strangely; *Latin* not altogether so well; but a Couplet of *English Verses* draws in all manner of Readers. Those are but innocent Artifices; but when a Notice of this kind contains more than is in the Title-Page, perhaps in the whole Book, it ought to be consider'd as an Imposition, and the Tradesman who dares commit such a Fraud ought to be distinguish'd to his Infamy, from his Brethren.

For my part, I have always made it a Rule, and I can't say that I have been often deceiv'd, to judge of Books by the Manner in which I see them advertis'd. If I see great and pompous Endeavours us'd in the Prints, to raise the Expectations of the World, I generally am satisfied with condemning the Bookseller, and despising the Author, who can join in making such low court to the Vulgar. I believe, the World, at least the understanding Part of it, agree with me in this; and I think, as Truth is for ever the same, it was always and always will be the Notion of Men

Men of Sense. Whoever looks into the Writings of Mr. *Prynne*, will find his Title-Pages generally amount to Abridgments of his Books; while those of Mr. *Selden* have but a few significant and expressive Words in their Front, which more emphatically shew their Value: or, to come down to a more familiar Instance; the Title of *Crusoe's Adventures* may pass for a Table of Contents, while that of *Capt. Gulliver's* is so short, that it can be advertis'd in two Lines.

Novem. 12. 1726.



Of



Of PLAY-WRITERS.

MANY and almost insuperable are the Difficulties which the Writers of this Age are to encounter with, at least that is the Case of such as deal in the *Drama*; who, tho' they are generally thought, and perhaps with some Truth, the greatest Gainers by their Inventions, yet meet with so many Obstacles in the Pursuit of their Studies, as may, upon the whole, lay them level with the others in every Thing but empty Reputation, and the Pleasure, if so thought, of being more particularly known.

This Proposition will be readily confessed by such as consider the Difficulty of tracing Mens Manners to their Springs; the Ease a poetical Mind ought to feel while engaged in a long Work; the Labour and Study necessary to compleat it; to say nothing of the Genius and Education which ought to be laid out on the Man who can well discharge himself of such a Task. But besides all these, when a Gentleman, furnished with those Advantages, and that Application which can make them useful, has laid out his Pains and Time, at least a Year's Study, to finish such a Performance, he has not done half his Work: He then has the Players to consult, a Set of People, for the most Part, disfurnished of all these Qualifications, yet, nevertheless, the only and absolute Judges of him and his Piece. After a Year's Delay, perhaps more, at one House, (I speak what we have ma-

ay Instances of) he applies to the other, where he is, in some Time after, received, his Work exhibited, and if it proves very excellent, and he has good Luck, by importuning his Friends, and soliciting People of Quality, after three or four Years spent in Attendance, he may get five hundred Pounds, as a full and ample Reward for an innocent Application of Talents, which, if maliciously or enthusiastically employed, might subvert a Religion, and unhinge a Constitution.

This I think sufficient to obviate the common Notion, that Dramatick Poets have now better Encouragement than ever. I am perswaded that in the Reign of King *Charles II.* when every Writer that could produce Sense, and really some who could not, might have a Play acted once a Year, and take for the Profits fifty, threescore, or a hundred Pounds, according to its Merit, with very little Trouble in making Interest, as they term it; Poets lived happier than now, when, as I said, three or four Years are to be spent in Idleness, probably in Penury the sure Attendant of it, before they can acquire a Sum so insignificant, that the meanest of genteel Professions would think the Time lost.

I hope I am not understood as laying these Inconveniences to the Charge of our Nobility and Gentry? No, I think them more polite, more learned, and more generous, than any preceding Age ever saw: But such is the Tyranny of a few insolent Fellows, who have the Play-houses under their Direction, and batten upon the Labours of better Men than themselves, that even their Patrons cannot be obliged by them. It is natural to Mankind to love Variety:

riety ; and yet these Men expect the World shall run twelve or fourteen Years after Entertainments, which, tho' ever so delightful, must needs cloy by frequent Repetition. To this Love of Novelty we owe the vast Indulgence which silly *Harlequinades* have lately met with : To the same Desire of Change the Introduction of *Italian Strollers*, who only add some articulate Nonsense to Drollery and Trick worse than *Lun's*. Could it be else possible, that a polite Set of People, who read and admire *Addison* now dead, and rewarded his Merit when living, should descend to encourage Exotick Jack-Puddings with large Subscriptions, and tacitly permit Men of Parts to starve, whose only Fault is being their Countrymen ? Could I say any People have done so, who had read the following Account given by that great Man in his Travels, in the Chapter of *Venice*, unless the Trouble of bringing Fools to Reason had been more than they could separately undertake, or jointly cared to do.

" The Comedies that I saw at *Venice*, or in
 " indeed in any other Part of *Italy*, are very in-
 " different, and more lewd than those of other
 " Countries : Their Poets have no Notion of
 " genteel Comedy, and fall into the most filthy
 " double Meanings imaginable, when they have
 " a Mind to make their Audience merry. There
 " is no Part generally so wretched as that of
 " the fine Gentleman, especially when he con-
 " verses with his Mistress ; for then the whole
 " Dialogue is an insipid Mixture of Pedantry
 " and Romance. But 'tis no wonder that the
 " Poets of so jealous and reserved a Nation,
 " fail in such Conversations on the Stage, as
 " they

" they have no Patterns of in Nature. There
" are four standing Characters which enter in-
" to every Piece that comes on the Stage, the
" Doctor, *Harlequin*, *Pantalone*, and *Coviello*.
" The Doctor's Character comprehends the whole
" Extent of a Pedant, that with a deep Voice,
" and a magisterial Air, breaks in upon Con-
" versation, and drives down all before him;
" every thing he says is back'd with Quotations
" out of *Galen*, *Hippocrates*, *Plato*, *Virgil*, or
" any Author that rises uppermost; and all An-
" swers from his Companions are look'd upon
" as Impertinences or Interruptions. *Harlequin's*
" Part is made up of Blunders and Absurdities:
" He is to mistake one Name for another, to
" forget his Errands, to stumble over Queens,
" and to run his Head against every Post that
" stands in his Way. This is all attended with
" something so comical in the Voice and Ge-
" stures, that a Man who is sensible of the Fol-
" ly of the Part, can hardly forbear being plea-
" sed with it. *Pantalone* is generally an old
" Cully, and *Coviello* a Sharper.

Thus far Mr. *Addison*; and if he says any Thing that may be favourably construed of them, it must be considered that he saw them at Home, where they were best; but how would his Indignation have risen if he had lived to see dull Strollers from thence invited hither; and for them that Theatre deserted, which he had so honoured and adorned!

His absolute Contempt of them appears more fully in the following Quotation, which succeeds what I have cited before.

" I have seen a Translation of the *Cid* acted
" at *Bolonia*, which would never have taken,
" had

" had they not found a Place in it for these
" Buffoons."

And yet such Entertainments are the Relief our Nobility and Gentry are forced to fly to, from the Treatment of arrogant home-bred Players, who might every Year have given them Variety of good Sense and Poetry, if they had taken half so much Pains to bring it in as they have to keep it out.

November 26, 1726.



of

Of the DIALOGUE of COMEDY.

*Creditur, ex medio quia Res arcessit, habere
Sudoris minimum, sed habet Comœdia, tanto
Plus Oneris, quanto Veniae minus— Hor.*

THERE is no Species of Poetry which our Criticks so frequently compliment us with an Excellence in, as that of *Comedy*. The English Muse has, they say, in that Part outdone not only all the Moderns, but even the Ancients. I am afraid, upon a strict Examination, this won't amount to an exact Truth. It was at first the Saying of some Writer, who did not narrowly search into the Nature of Comedy; and we have since as inconsiderately adopted it for the general Sense, by way of Compliment to our Country. It is beyond doubt, that our Comedy ought to be the Best in the World, because our great Variety of Characters furnishes us with the best Materials; but I fear that our Poets, thro' want of Skill or Tools, don't always shew themselves to be the best Workmen.

After advancing this bold Conjecture, I expect to hear the Clamour of a Multitude, who will take it ill to be disturbed in Opinions which they have so long and implicitly assented to, that they won't comprehend the Force of any Objections against them: But I hope, as in this Age the Liberty of free Debate has prevailed in Matters

Matters more momentous than this can be, I shan't be refused the Privilege of shewing the World my private Sentiments, and enforcing them with such Reasons as I apprehend may make them universal Notions; especially when they will find that for this Time, I only intend to make Observations upon the *Dialogue* of modern Comedy.

PLATO and LUCIAN are recommended to us by the Learned, as perfect Models in their several Ways of Dialogue. They are allowed always to have written what the Characters they drew would have spoken, in the same Circumstances as they represent them; with only this Difference, that Writing is always presumed to be more correct and elegant than extempore speaking. I have always esteem'd it an essential Quality in *Dialogue*, to have either Business doing, an Argument to manage, or a Tale to tell; without some of these, it is but talking for talking sake, and can no more please in Writing than in common Life. Supposing it granted, that a good *Dialogue* ought to have one or more of these Points to pursue; it will follow, that the entire Neglect of them, impertinent Diversions from them, or aiming at them in a manner inconsistent with the Character of the Speaker, or Nature of the Subject, are all Vices in this kind of Writing; and that where-ever any Conversations are obtruded upon us for *Dialogues*, replete with these Circumstances, they ought to lose that Name, and be more properly and justly stiled the Monologues of the Author.

Will then the *Dialogues* of our most applauded Comedies stand this Test? They consist of no one Business, nor of a single Manner of treating it:

it! They are a Sort of Oglio, made up of Si-mile, Repartee, Comparison, Chit-Chat, Snip-Snap Wit, and moral Sentence, the Lord knows how jumbled together: The Poet neither minds his Characters nor Subjects; but when he begins a Scene, makes his Persons speak all the Wit he can find; and when his Stock is exhausted, off they march, for as little Reason as they came on; they came to play off their Rest of Wit, and go as soon as 'tis done. BEN JOHNSON, in one of his *Prologues*, seems to value himself, and upbraid some of his Cotemporaries, on this Account; for, says he, *I make Jeffs for my Scenes, while they make Scenes for their Jeffs.* Alas! had he lived in these Days, what Bundles of ingenious Scenery must he have met with, that could serve for no other Use in Nature, than to drain the Author's Common-Place Book.

How monstrous and unnatural is it to hear People upon the Stage, not only speaking better than those of equal Rank in Life, but uttering as much Wit in half an Hour, as the Poet could think of in half a Year? An ingenious Fo-reigner, after observing upon the forc'd Expressions, unnatural Flights, and grievous Affectation of Wit and Poetry, which are to be found in the *Dialogue* of our Comedies, shews the Absurdity of them by the following just Allusion; which, because I forget his Words, I must be forc'd to give in my own. " Suppose, says he, " (addressing himself to his Friend in a Letter " from hence) yourself at a Puppet-Shew; and the " bungling Manager, unable to tune the Squea- " ker properly, you every now and then hear " the Squall of an human Voice, which con- " vincès you that something better than Pup-
P
" pets"

" pets furnish a Part of the Entertainment. This
 " is exactly the Case of a Comick Writer. His
 " Business is to shew Nature to the Life; and
 " his Art is shewn when they are perswaded
 " that what they see is such: But when, thro'
 " want of Skill to manage his Voice, you find
 " that he himself, not his Persons, speaks, pre-
 " sently your Pleasure flags; for your Deception
 " was the Parent of your Delight." I am afraid,
 I wrong this ingenious Gentleman by my Re-
 presentation of his Sense; but I should wrong
 my Countrymen more, if I stifled any Argument
 that seems so well calculated to restore them to
 their Taste.

I have often heard it said by such as would excuse this Practice, that 'tis a Fault on the right Side, and that too much Wit is a Vice we ought not to complain of in a Poet. To this I answer; That a Fault is a Fault; and that if a Poet has not Judgment enough to manage his Wit, he had better have been without it. Wit in a Woman, has been compared to Mettle in a blind Horse: I am sure, the Wit of such a Poet makes a much closer Comparison. Besides, it is not so difficult, nor does it require such a Genius as some People imagine, to string together trite Similes and bald Comparisons; it is the Work of Industry and Memory, not Fancy or Judgment. One of the most applauded of our Comick Writers, who, I suppose, fell into this way rather in Compliance with the common Taste, than through his own Judgment, has, in a little Treatise upon *Humour*, given us a short Receipt to strike out that sort of Pleasantry which arises from the Habit or Affectation of the Characters. " It is no more, says he, than to
 " col-

" collect the technical Terms of the Arts or
" Sciences, which they are supposed to practise or
" affect, and throw them into Metaphors, Simi-
" lies, Comparisons, and Allusions, and the Thing
" is done." Here's a Rule for *Dialogue*, un-
known to the *Classicks*: And yet not only this
Author himself, but most of the succeeding ones,
have endeavour'd closely to pursue it; and have
received Applause in Proportion to the Degrees
in which they came up to it.

Let me add a Word more, concerning another
Ornament of modern *Dialogue*, which has too
often a very good Effect; and that is, *Bawdry*.
Most of the applauded Plays, written before the
Year 1700, are furnished with a *quantum sufficit*
of this Stuff, which gave high Delight to a rude
Multitude: But I think we have latterly Sense
enough to keep clear of such Ribaldry. We
have strip'd our Writers from such scandalous
Affistance; though I believe the Miscarriage of
several modern Productions has been owing to
the want of so powerful an Auxiliary.

December 10, 1726.



~~ESSAYS ON THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND~~

Of the SOLEMNIZING of CHRISTMAS.

To &c.

SIR,

THE Day is at hand which the whole Christian World agree in chusing to pay their Thanks on, for the greatest Blessing that ever befel Mankind : Give me leave then to shew my particular Gratitude, by publishing some Thoughts, properly arising from the Day : A Day made famous, sacred, and venerable, by the Birth of a King, a Prophet, and a God.

Tho' it be a Point the furthest from clear, that our Saviour was born upon a Day, whose Anniversary exactly corresponds with the twenty-fifth of December, yet as it is a Day laid out by the Consent of the Body of Christians, and the Laws of our own Country, for the celebrating the Festival of his Nativity, I am of Opinion that no good Subject ought, upon any private Reasons of his own, dispute the Time of Solemnizing it ; as I think no Person, without disclaiming his own Benefit by the Merits of Christ, or the Name of his Disciple, ought to refuse or neglect doing it in a proper Manner. By a proper Manner, I am sure I cannot be understood in the Sense that my Countrymen generally put in Practice ; neither singing of wanton Songs, devouring of Sweet-Meats, nor revelling in drunken

drunken Debaucheries, are a proper Way of rejoicing for the Birth of a Redeemer, who came for the Salvation of Souls, and whose Kingdom, as he says himself, is not of this World.

It is very unhappy that the Superstition of our Ancestors has given this sacred Festival such a Retinue of Holy-days, as they are called; an Institution calculated to destroy its own Use. Sure the Service of God may be better promoted, by employing those Hands that are necessary to feed the Hungry, and cloath the naked, than, by giving them a Pretence for Idleness, authorize them to commit Riots, and destroy the Parsimony of Months in a few Hours, spent in Debauches; which, besides the Offence to God, are a Grievance to Society; and whatever Correction they may receive in another World, are in this only the Forerunners of Repentance and Penury. I would not here be thought to assert, that the labouring Part of the People should go without their Days of Indulgence, and Hours of Relaxation from Toil; but I think the Mosaical Law has amply provided for them, by allowing them a Seventh Day from Rest; a Commandment, which if it had been but merely political, is not to be equalled in respect to its Commodiousness to Mankind, and the Comfort and Happiness it draws upon Society.

But besides those greater Enormities, there are several petty Abuses of this holy Anniversary, committed, like the others, upon a Pretence of doing Honour to it; but which are so far from it, as to be a Disgrace to the Christian Religion. That idle Ceremony of adorning the Walls and Windows of Houses and Churches with green Bushes of Laurel, Holly, and the like, stands

among the foremost of such. It is a Remnant of Paganism, and, as such, has been condemned by a Council even in the Infancy of Christianity: How it was introduced is easy to guess: When whole Cities or Nations were converted, such was the Remissness of their Pastors, as to require no more from them than a general Profession of Faith, without attempting to abolish their ancient Customs, tho' some of them were directly inconsistent with the Plainness and Simplicity of the new Religion they embraced. I believe this is a pretty just Way of accounting for most of the ridiculous and superstitious Ceremonies, which we find blended with the Devotion of the Christians abroad; and I must add, that such Things join'd to the florid and romantick Notions of the prophanie Philosophers, when it became their Interest to receive Baptism and profess Christianity, have been the Ground-work of all the Errors and Schismatical Doctrines which the Church of *Rome* has cook'd up for her Votaries to swallow; tho' I cannot leave this Subject without applauding the Christian Zeal of the modern Popes; in refusing to allow the Missionary Jesuits Permission to indulge their Chinese Converts in their Inclinations, for in-grafting the prophane Opinions of their Philosopher *Confucius* upon the sacred Stock of the Christian Religion.

Perhaps I may be thought idle for animadverting upon the superstitious Fooleries of the Vulgar, such as the *Christmas* Candles, and in the Country the *Christmas* Block; tho' we have the Word of the venerable *Bede*, that this last was a Custom among the Heathen Saxons, performed at the same Time of the Year in Honour of their

their false Gods, and, by I know not what Carelessness of their Converters, suffered to be transplanted into the Christian Religion along with them: I say, I may chance to be censur'd for observing this, which, I confess, would hardly deserve Notice, if the greatest Part of the Country Pastors did not, instead of leading their Flocks aright, cherish and encourage them in such Idolatrous Practices.

Another prophane Custom amongst the People is, that of singing Carols during this Idleness they are indulged in: We are told by the Advocates for this Practice, that it was begun in Imitation of the Angels, who sung *Gloria in excelsis*, &c. over the Cabin Christ was born in, on the Morning of his Birth; and that singing is a proper Expression of the Joy we ought to feel on so blessed an Occasion. Without contesting the Truth of these Things, is not our Devotion miserably degenerated from Hymns of Praise to Songs of Wantonness? And can that Joy be acceptable to Heaven which rises in us from the Fumes of Liquors, or the Gratification of our vicious Appetites?

Some People think it an Act of Religion to feast in this Season on particular Viands; while others, as ridiculous, think it an Abomination to touch them. Neither to be sure are *in* the right here; but they who think that Gluttony can be methodized into Devotion, are most in the wrong. I will venture to assure my Readers, that no Reason can be drawn from Religion, why salt Fish could not make a proper Christmas Dinner, nor why Min'd-Pyes and Plumb-Puddings would not be as good Food at Midwinter.

The Custom of chusing King and Queen seems so harmless and inoffensive to most People, that it may be dangerous to attack it; but sure no Body will pretend that it does not carry an Air of Levity, unbecoming the Sanctity of the Season; a Number of young Folks of both Sexes drawn together upon this Occasion, highly feasting, luxuriously drinking, indulging wanton Discourse, and agitating the Blood by indecent Motion, take a very improper Way of celebrating a holy Festival; but what makes this Gambol more scandalous is, that it is (as are most of our *Christmas* Tricks) an undoubted Offspring of the *Saturnalia* of the *Romans*, who about the latter End of December in every Year gave their Slaves a Liberty for four or five Days of drinking and feasting, and playing all the mad Pranks they could think of, in Honour of *Saturn* and the Golden Age, when all Men were free, and Master and Slave were Names unknown. From this Pagan Institution, our Group of Holidays, and all the monstrous Fooleries that are committed on them, derive their Originals: Hence luxurious Feasting, hence chusing of Kings, and hence mumming of infamous Invention, and I am afraid hence comes it that our *Christmas* is carried so far backwards into the Month of December, since, if we believe some of the Fathers, the Night on which our Saviour was born, was the shortest of the whole Year, which answers better to our tenth or eleventh of the Month, than to the twenty fifth; and tho' this may be attributed to the Irregularity or Deficiency of the Julian Year, yet if according to the Gregorian Scheme, we have hitherto mistaken but eleven Days, we shall find it still put back three

or four, which is sufficient Foundation for this Conjecture.

But here I expect to be interrupted with an Objection, that since the Wisdom of the *Romans* thought a Relaxation from Labour for several Days necessary for their working People, why it may not be as proper among us; on which I will only observe, that we know of no hebdomadal Days of Rest they had, as ours enjoy; and besides, this mad Feast, at its first Institution amongst them, lasted but one Day, tho' the Luxury and Degeneracy of the People, in process of Time, extended it to four, five, and six, which Number we are not content with: The least we make of our *Christmas* is twelve Days; some contend for twenty, while others, more debauched, are for stretching it to *Candlemas*.

Upon the whole, I hope it appears, that none of those are the proper Methods of solemnizing a holy Season; and that if this Day be distinguished by any Excess, it ought to be an Excel's of Sobriety, (if I may be allowed the Expression.) I am neither for destroying Chearfulness, nor establishing Fasting and Mortification at this Time, I can't conceive any Pleasure These can give God, nor any Offence That; but I am clearly of Opinion, that the Devotion of a Glutton is fruitless, and the Joy of a Drunkard sinful.

I am, SIR,

Decem. 24. 1726.

Yours, &c.

Of



Of TRUTH.

TRUTH, I am apt to believe, is not so powerful and charming a Beauty, as the Mythologists represent Her. The Number of Admirers, which her Rivals, Falsehood and Error, have now, and in all Ages, seduced from her, gives Strength to my Opinion. But what yet more confirms it, is, that not a few of the most sincere Lovers of Truth have doated on her for the Disguise of Falsehood which they found her in; that is, for certain ornamental Trappings which she wore; unmoved and unaffected with her naked Charms..

That she wants Power, appears from the frequent Use she has made of the Assistance of Falsehood, to recommend herself to the Minds of Men. This must be true, or else she has had very bad Advocates, who have ruined her Cause in endeavouring to support it. Thus the supposed *Acts of Pontius Pilate*, the Epistles of *Agbarus* and *Lentulus*, and several others of that Stamp, which by the most zealous and judicious Criticks are allowed to be the pious Forgeries of the primitive Christians, either help'd to advance the Cause of Christianity, or served for Arguments against it. If the first, then Truth has received Aid from Falsehood; if the last, her Friends, as I said, have betray'd her, and made her in her Turn subservient to Falsehood.

What Shame is it, that those who have Truth on their Side, cannot hold fast by it: but the wretched

wretched Itch of Novelty betrays them here; Truth is one and the same, while Falsehood is various and multiplex. Mr. Toland observes, that when the *Roman Philosophers* and Poets first embraced the Christian Religion, they in a little Time sophisticated it so with their Fables and Fancies, that it almost ceas'd to be the same: However the People, through their Fondness for Novelty and Variety, swallow'd it very greedily. The Priests finding it took, went on ingrafting upon the Poets till the Reformation. And, as it happened, several of them had a similar Genius, so that the Metamorphoses of *Ovid* are not more romantick and absurd than the *Lives of the Popish Saints*.

When the Bishops of *Rome* grew great Temporal Princes, they minded Religion no more than other Temporal Princes. Knowledge, the great Supporter of Truth, was suffered to fall to Ruin; Ignorance bred Devotion to Falsehood and Folly; and the little Learning that was left in the World, was not to be found in *their* Courts, but in the Possession of a Dronish Monk, who, finding what bid fairest for Applause in such Times, turned the Tales and Whimsies of those Poets and Philosophers, which he hardly understood, to the Service of the Reigning Superstition.

There was never a nobre extraordinary Piece of Supererrogation in this way, than the following Story; the Substance of it I found to a Title in an old Monkish Legend, but the Style, for the sake of your Readers, I have endeavour'd to accommodate to the modern Taste.

The miserable Wretch, who is the Subject of it, was I am sure never since the Time of the

Apostles known by his Family or Parentage, nor by the Place of his Birth; yet our ingenious Author, who writ several hundred Years after, has equipp'd him with all these Circumstances, and a Life full of Adventures, to shew that he scorn'd to be outdone even by the Pagans in Richness of Invention.

The Life of Judas Iscariot, according to Ranulphus, a Monk of Chester.

' HE was the Son of one *Reuben*, of the
 ' Tribe of *Issachar*, and *Cyborea*, very probably
 ' of the same Race. This Couple dwelt in *Jerusalem*: But on the first Night of their Marriage,
 ' the Woman dreamed that she had conceived a Son, who should prove a Traytor to
 ' the Prince of his own People; she communicated her Dream to her Husband, who readily joined with her in a Sorrow that lasted till
 ' the Birth of this Son. This created new Un-
 ' easinesses; they were unwilling to murder the
 ' Infant, yet equally loth to have his Life
 ' prove such a Detriment to their own Nation;
 ' so at length they resolved to put him to Sea
 ' in a little Boat, and let Fortune and the Winds
 ' provide for him. The Vessel was accidentally
 ' blown into an Island called *Iscariot*, (from
 ' whence came *Judas's* Surname,) where the
 ' Queen of the Country, having no Children of
 ' her own, took this Chance-Gift, as from the
 ' Hand of Providence, adopted him for her Son,
 ' and gave him a Princely Education.

' While he was yet a Youth, the Hope of
 ' her Court, and Heir Apparent of her Kingdom,
 ' she, unfortunately for him, became pregnant,

“ nant, and was delivered of a Son. From this Time *Judas's* Hopes began to decline, tho' the Queen continued still very fond of him; but as the young Prince grew up, the Eyes of all the Courtiers were turned upon him, and the unhappy Foundling perceived himself quite neglected. The Envy and Malignity of his Nature could not brook this; he therefore laid a Plot, and in pursuance of it, privately murder'd his too powerful Competitor.

“ This could not be long concealed, nor his deserved Punishment avoided; if he staid in the Island; he therefore fled, and coming to *Jerusalem*, hired himself as a Servant to *Pontius Pilate*, then Deputy-Governor of Jewry: He soon got into the Confidence and Esteem of his Master, by a ready Compliance and Agreement with his vicious Disposition, as appears in this Instance. A Window of *Pilate's* House looked into the Orchard of *Reuben*, *Judas's* Father, which was well stocked with fair Fruit; of which *Pilate*, upon a time, expressing his Inclination to taste, *Judas* without more ado climb'd over the Wall, and stole some; but as he was returning, was met by old *Reuben*, who upbraiding him with the Theft, he presently knock'd out his Brains with a Stone, and came off undiscover'd.

“ *Cyborea* being now a rich Widow, *Pilate*, to reward his Servant, found Means of compelling her to marry *Judas*, who thereby found himself in good Circumstances, but not a whit the happier; for not long after the Marriage, inquiring into the Cause of a continual Sadness which he saw upon his Wife's Countenance, she related to him at large her Misfor-

Misfortunes, her Dream, her Child's Birth and Fate, her Husband's Murder, and her own Resolution of Widowhood, over-ruled by the Governor's Tyranny. From some odd Circumstances in this Story, *Judas* found out what Sins he had been plunged into, and confess'd to her his accumulated Guilt of Murder, Parricide, and Incest. The good Woman, with great Intreaties, prevailed upon him to repent; and as a Proof of his Contrition, to become a Disciple of Christ; which he did, and finished his wicked Life as we are told in the Scriptures.

Here's a Mixture of Ignorance and Invention so apparently blended, as to excite at once our Surprise and Contempt. How *Jerusalem* lay with regard to the Neighbourhood of the Sea, or what was the Situation of this Island, that the Infant was thrown upon, our Author does not tell us, because he knew not; but we find by the Resemblance which the Beginning of the Fable has to the Story of *Moses* and *Pharaoh's* Daughter, that the Writer of it had read the old Testament, and by the Dream and Circumstances of Parricide and Incest that he was acquainted with the Clasick Poets, and the History of *Oedipus*; and by throwing together his Knowledge of sacred and profane Books, has made an unnatural and ridiculous Jumble of both.

June 3, 1727.

Qf

Of ADDRESSES.

THERE is nothing so little attended to, tho' perhaps nothing deserves a more serious Consideration, as the Art of supporting a reasonable and agreeable Conversation. The Knowledge of our own Character and Importance, and an Acquaintance with the Temper, Figure, Studies, Opinions, and Inclinations of those we converse with, are chiefly necessary; these we ought to know before we open our Lips: Nor are the Circumstances of Time, Place, and Occasion, less to be regarded. I believe I may venture to affirm, That no one ever conversed *properly*, who was either ignorant, or negligent of these Requisites. Yet so great is the Difficulty of knowing and practising them justly, that I have seen several Men of the best Parts, and finest Imaginations, submit to a decent Silence, and the Reputation of dull Companions, rather than risque the Infringement of these inviolable Laws. 'Tho', for the Comfort of the Beaus and Belles, I must confess I have observ'd several others pass for agreeable Companions, and pretty Fellows, who never either study'd or practis'd one Tittle of the true Rules of Conversation. When I consider this, I wish it in my Power to relax something of the Rigour of these Laws; which, if duly observ'd, would often obscure some of the whitest Teeth, and no less frequently lock up some of the most eloquent Lips in the Nation.

How.

However indulgent a good-natur'd Man may be to the Talker, who overlooks or infringes these Rules: Yet sure no Mercy is to be shewn to the Writer, who sits down coolly to converse upon Paper with his Friend or Patron, and upon mature Deliberation, transgresses every one of the Precepts which he ought to observe. Most of our modern Dedications are Instances of this, and not a few of them have met with the Indulgence allow'd commonly to the talking Sycophant. Were I empower'd to act as a poetical Censor, I should be often provoked to imitate *Alexander*, and administer the Bastinado along with the Guineas to every *Cherilus* of the Age. Is it not shocking to Reason, to see a Lady complimented in a Dedication for Conjugal Piety, and her Husband pointed at in the Streets for a Hen-peck'd Cuckold? Could that Man either know himself, or his Patron, who advised a certain Lord to imitate his glorious Ancestors, when he had never heard who was his Grandfather? Or he who flatter'd a judicial Officer upon his Valour, and thank'd a noted Fox-hunter for his Care of the Muses?

There is another kind of Conversation, which ought still to be more regarded, that is, when Subjects speak or write to their Sovereigns; all the Care, all the Circumspection, the Observation of the strictest Rules, joined with the humblest Awe and Respect, are necessary to furnish out a Speech or Address of this Kind.

For the greatest Part of last Winter, our *Gazette* was continually fill'd with Addresses from one Part or other of the People; and it is not to be doubted, but the happy Event of his Majesty's peaceable Accession to the Throne
of

of his Ancestors, will occasion the Abundance of their Joy to be poured out in the same Manner. As it was fashionable to read those Pieces then, I threw away some Part of my Time upon them; and from comparing them with the Rules they ought to be drawn by, have made some Observation upon Addresses in general, that may be serviceable to such as read, and would judge of those Performances, and not altogether useless to future Addressers.

The Design of the last Sett of Addresses was to express the People's Approbation of the Measures his late Majesty had taken, with respect to *Spain* and the *Empire*. This ought to have been done with all imaginable Decency, if the Addressers had consider'd either their own Character, or His to whom they spoke: But so it happen'd, that some of them undertook to direct him how he should proceed in the laudable Designs he had undertaken; while others applauded him with the same Rudeness of Joy, with which they would clap one of their boxing Companions on the Back, and cry, *Well done, my Lad!* Those who spoke thus, forgot his sacred Character; those who huff'd and bully'd, as if they would beard the Emperor and *Spaniard*, forgot the Sense that ought to be supported in their own. But we must be so just as to confess, that some of those last Addresses were drawn up with that Delicacy and Politeness, with which a good and wise Subject ought to speak to a great and glorious King. That from the University of *Cambridge* claims a particular Regard; but to be able to shew all its Beauties, requires the same Genius that drew it up.

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The Business and Purpose of the present Addresses, is to express a reasonable Sorrow for the Loss of his late Majesty, and the Grief which his present Majesty feels from thence; and humbly and decently to shew our own Joy in his happy Accession to the Government of these Nations: And to this I believe all reasonable People will confine it. But if there be any who will judge so ill, as to clog their Gratulations with *Petitions*, they will shew his Majesty and the World, that their Loyalty is built upon their Interest, and that their Zeal is owing to their Pursuit of By-Ends.

I fancy I need not caution any body from the Insolence of mingling their *Advice* with their Sorrow or Joy; that would be forgetting their own Duty, and overlooking his Majesty's Capacity. Subjects are to obey, not to advise, without being consulted. Our Constitution has put it in our Monarch's Power to have the Counsel of all, or any of his Subjects, where, and when he will; it has also mark'd the Prof'er of it without his Call, for an high Offence. I think, in some Cases, to offer the King Advice, without being legally summon'd to his Counsel, is no less than a *Premunire*.

But the worst Ingredient in a Composition of this kind, is Complaint. Upon this Occasion none can be made, which concerns the Prince on the Throne; but if any Sett of People should be so weak, as to take upon them to censure any Part of that King's Actions whose Loss they are professing to deplore, besides the Absurdity of it, his present Majesty might justly resent it, as an Insult upon his own pious Sorrow.

In a Word, to be decent in the Sorrow, hearty in the Joy, and careful to avoid that Rudeness and Arrogance which have been already described, is the Business of a good Address upon this Occasion: And those who shall do this with Success, will have no Occasion to envy the most exalted Flights, or finest Flourishes, of the most Ostentatious Writers.

July 8, 1727.





Of TRADE and TRADERS.

To &c.

SIR,

THE great Usefulness of Trade in general is so universally allow'd, that, a Man would be guilty of the Folly of arguing without an Opponent, to endeavour to prove it, as the vast Benefits and Advantages this Nation in particular receives from Commerce are so well known, that to set them forth would be needless Repetition and Tautology.

For these Reasons the Merchant has all along been a Favourite of the Common-wealth: Tho' I think not in so high a Degrée as his Importance deserved. We have latterly been infected with some of the *French* Pride, and therefore thought, that Nobility should be set above his Pretences, and made inconsistent with his Profession. But this is a false Taste. Why should not the Trader here find all the Avenues to Honour as open to him, and the Nobles find the Paths to Profit as clear, as they are laid in *Venice* and *Holland*; since it is evident not only that Traffick is as much the Hinge and Support of this Constitution as it can be of those; but that Titles and Dignities are as much reverenc'd in those Common-wealths, especially in *Venice*, as they are or can be in this.

But there was a Time when it was otherwise. Very early in our History, when the Honour of Knights

Knighthood was a Dignity in great Credit; when none under the Degree of an Earl had a Title more honourable than *Sir*; even before it was communicated to the Judges, and other great Officers of the Law; I have the Pleasure to find the Mayors, Sheriffs, and other principal Citizens of *London* frequently invested with it, and that way put on a Level with the Barons of Parliament; perhaps, ranked above them: For such was the Case then, if there had been any Baron who was not knighted.

Such wise Princes as *Edward I* and *III.* not only made several provisional Laws for the Merchants, but also conferr'd on them the highest Adventitious Honours in their Power; such was that of Knighthood: For conferring other Titles by the King's Grant was not yet in Use: The Names and Offices of Earls and Barons were appendant to Lands, and it was the Possession of those which hereditary Nobility first commenc'd in.

But tho' succeeding Princes have not agreed to make Traders noble, yet they have contributed to make them rich: A Recompence which the most reasonable of them have thought sufficient. Certainly, to be fix'd in a sure Way of procuring Wealth, and ample Freedom of disposing of that Wealth when procured, is to be preferr'd to the precarious Enjoyment of Dignity and Pre-eminence.

Queen *Elizabeth*, whose Memory will ever be honour'd, for the Advantages which *Englishmen* drew from her Reign, deserves not more Applause for any of her Actions, than for the Care she took of Commerce and Navigation. I shall fill the rest of my Letter with a remarkable

able Instance, of a valuable Branch of Trade, which she recover'd, and asserted for her Subjects, against the Combination of some of the strongest Powers in Europe. A Lesson that may remind our Merchants of the Obligations they owe the Crown, and our Statesmen of the Right we have always claimed, of *The Sovereignty of the Seas.*

King *Henry III.* having, in the Course of his troublesome Reign, occasion for more Ships and naval Force than his own Dominions could supply him with, borrow'd some from the *Old Hans-Towns* of the Empire. The Agreement was, as they pretended, not only to pay them for their Service according to the Time they serv'd, but also to make good whatever Losses those Ships sustained in War, or by other Accidents. They serv'd, and were paid; and, upon Conclusion of a Peace, were sent home: In their Return a Storm arose, in which the greatest Part of their Fleet was cast away. They demanded of the King Satisfaction for this Loss, according to Covenant; which he, not being able to repair with Money, compromis'd, by granting Privileges in their Trade to *England*: Among others, that they should pay but One *per Cent.* Duty for all the Goods they imported or exported.

They enjoy'd this Immunity till the Reign of Queen *Mary*, to the great Loss of the English Traders; which she, very reasonably considering, rais'd the Duty upon the *Hansatick* Merchants from One to Twenty *per Cent.* They forbore their Trade, through Spleen; and complained heavily of this Infraction, as they term'd it, of Privileges, purchased at first with their Money,

Money, and confirm'd by such long Usage through the Reigns of fourteen English Monarchs, King Philip undertook, at first, to be their Mediator with the Queen his Wife; but his Journey to Spain, and her Death soon after, put a Stop to all their Proceedings; so that nothing was done till some Time after Queen Elizabeth's Accession.

In the mean while, the English Merchants wanting the Northern Commodities, and knowing the Northern Parts had a like Want of theirs, took up the Trade themselves; and thus was the Foundation laid of a Commerce, ever since greatly advantageous to this Country.

But to return: Queen Elizabeth being applied to by the Han-satrick Merchants, answered them, That She would make no Innovations, but would secure them in the Possession of all the Immunities she found among them. This gave so little Satisfaction, that they used all their Endeavours, by Fraud and Force, to supplant the English Merchants in those Places where they traded, but to no Purpose. At length they complained to the Emperor, who presently sent an Ambassador to demand what they called their Rights. This had no Effect to their Advantage; for, presently after, the Queen perceiving their Machinations against her People, publish'd a Proclamation, importing, That the Han-Towns might trade to England upon the same Terms with other Foreigners, and no better.

This so exasperated them, that at the Diet at Ratisbon they procur'd an Imperial Decree, by which all the English Merchants were declared Monopolists; and, as such, forbid to trade. Upon this, they were driven out of some Towns; but

others more powerful, as *Hamburg* and *Stode*, did for their own Interest receive and protect the *English* against this Ban of the Empire.

The Queen in Revenge set forth a Proclamation, offering the *Han-Towns* the Liberties she found them in Possession of, provided her Subjects might find the same Reception and Encouragement in their Territories, as they had before the Imperial Ban, and upon the same Duties which the *Hansaticks* were to pay in *England*.

This they refused; and in return, endeavour'd to get *Stode* and *Hamburg*, which protected the *English*, cut off from the Empire: But that Design was suspended, till they saw the Success of the *Spanish* Invasion in 1588, which was then on Foot: *Philip* having promis'd, if he succeeded, to procure them Redress..

The Queen knowing their Designs, publish'd another Proclamation, *Forbidding the Hansaticks, under Pain of being dealt with as Enemies, to send or transport Corn, Vituals, Arms, Timber, Masts, Cables, Metals, Ammunition, or Men, to Spain or Portugal.* Which however they attempted to do; and after the Defeat of the *Spanish Armada*, had in one Season sixty of their Ships laden with those forbidden Goods taken by her Majesty's Fleet upon the Coast of *Spain* and *Portugal*. The Queen had some Thoughts of making Use of these Captures to compose the Differences with them; but upon hearing of an Assembly of them convened at *Lubeck*, to consult Revenge upon her Subjects, and their Protectors, she made absolute Prizes of all the Ships taken, except two, which she return'd to them, with an Account of their Fellows Fate, and her just Indignation.

All

All the Remedy they had left was to procure a huffing Embassy to be sent from the King of Poland to her Majesty, which was answered in as high a Strain as it was delivered; and there ended their Attempts: They fate down with the Loss of their Ships and Privileges, while the English pursu'd their Trade peaceably to all Parts of Germany; and from thence have found the Way through the White Sea to Archangel, and other Places, to the great Honour and Glory, as well as Wealth and Profit of this Nation.

July 15,

I am, Sir, Yours,

1727.

CIVICUS,



of

Of PLACES and EMPLOY- MENTS.

AT a Season when one half of the World are almost mad with the Expectation of Places and Employments, which the other are to lose, it may not be amiss to consider something of the Nature and Quality of publick Preferments, and the Aptitude and Fitness of the Candidates.

First then, I take it to be a common Mistake, and as such I expect to see it inserted in some future Edition of Browne's *Vulgar Errors*, that Merit of any kind is necessary to the procuring or well filling of a publick Employment: And this Notion I think cannot be too well inculcated into the Minds of my Fellow-Subjects; for if that rash Opinion, just mentioned, should gain Ground amongst them, no body knows what Mischief it may occasion; publick Business would soon be at a full Stop, and the Concerns of the Nation go to rack for want of People to manage them. It would be a deplorable Thing indeed, and could not but portend the Downfall of our excellent Constitution, if so many Places of Honour and Profit must go a begging for Incumbents; so many I say as would remain unfilled, if that foolish and dangerous Notion had universally prevailed.

But

But, thank Heaven, it is otherwise; our Taste and Understanding are more refin'd, than to embrace such pernicious Doctrines merely upon the Faith of credulous Antiquity; which our Religion and our Laws have condemn'd as erroneous, if the Word, or at least the Practice of their Professors may be depended upon.

It is another idle Opinion, which some few Folks entertain, that they themselves are not fit for such and such Places; I hope this Error won't spread, for it may do no less Mischief than the other. A Man of true modern Prudence will think himself equally qualified for all Employments in his Prince's Gift; he knows that the Occupation of a good Place, by a particular Prerogative, finds, or makes all the Merit and Qualifications that are necessary to fill it. Some Men are so weak, as to lose the Advantages of Time and Friends, for want of knowing what modestly to ask for: But the Man I have been describing will presently find out, that every Thing is proper for him to demand, which is, in his Patron's Power to grant; he knows the Truth of Sir John Vanbrugh's Definition, and praises his expressive Conciseness, when he says, that the Business of a good Place is *to take the Salary, and put in a Deputy.*

The famous Painter Rubens had the Inheritance of the Office of Secretary of State for Flanders; which, at his Death, he was bequeath-ing, as a suitable Provision for one of his Sons: The awkward and modest Youth desired of his Father, that his Portion might rather be in Lands, or Money; for, that he was a Man of no Abilities, and altogether unfit for State-Affairs. The Old Man, with a grave Smile, check'd

check'd him for his Folly, and comforted him with this excellent Aphorism, which contains a solid and everlasting Truth, *Nescis mi Fili quam parvus Mundus regitur Sapientia.* My Son, thou knowest not how little Wisdom goes to the Management of the World.

*He that has but Impudence,
To all Things has a fair Pretence;
And put among his Wants, but Shame,
To the whole World he may lay Claim;*

I cite those excellent Verses, lest my first Proposition shou'd be understood in too confin'd a Sense. By the Word *Merit* there, I do not only mean the Capacity for executing an Office, but the Pretensions for expecting it. Let no Body say to himself, what have I done to deserve this Trust from the Publick? Or what, to deserve this Favour from my Lord? These are idle Considerations; the Man who has the Courage to ask for any Thing, has by that Courage actually deserved it, and what is infinitely of more Importance, may sometimes happen to obtain it.

There are some People who may have Qualifications a little different from these which seem absolutely necessary to those Charges which they deign to accept of; but that I insist upon is no more a Fault than having no Qualifications at all. For the Comfort of my self and other worthless Gentlemen out of Place, I can assure you, that there are Secretaries who cannot write, and Auditors who cannot read; who to be sure are no better qualify'd for their Places, than the Man who was made an Accomptant General,

General, for understanding the Greek Clasicks, or he who was made a Commissioner of Trade, for his great Skill in Logick. I know this will pass for a Paradox; but the best way to solve it is, by confessing ingenuously that those two last Gentlemen knew nothing at all of what they pretended to.

Yet there are some supplemental Qualities that sometimes will attone for the want of the Principals. This Position and a general Notion of Aptitude for Places, will be sufficiently illustrated by the following Story, which therefore shall conclude this Discourse.

Teague meeting Darby, accosts him thus, *Arrab by my Should did you bear of the great Preferment that is come upon my Cusbin Paddy? Fat is it Joy?* answer'd Darby. *By Chreest he is made Shecratary to a Coal-Wharf,* reply'd Teague: *Shecratary to a Coal-Wharf, agbra fat is dat?* quoth Darby. *It isb wulgarly call'd Clerk, honey Dear,* answer'd Teague. *Ubhoo,* says Darby, *by my Sboul he can't write nor read nothing at all.. Dat isb no matter,* concluded Teague, *for by Chreest he can notch so well as no Man living.*

July 22, 1727.



Of

THE
ART OF CHUSING MEMBERS OF
PARLIAMENT.

To &c.

SIR,

THE Election of Members for a New Parliament is a Matter of such Importance, as ought to be sufficiently attended to. The Minds of the Electors cannot be too well prepared, before they enter upon so momentous an Affair: for the Event of their Proceedings they are to answer to themselves, their Fellow-Subjects, and their Posterity; since nothing can happen in which their Religion, Interests and Liberties are so highly concerned.

It is not to be presumed that Men will run rashly into Paths, that, for ought they know, may lead to Destruction; and trust those important Concerns, their Freedom, and their Laws, into Hands which they are Strangers to. This cannot be thought of reasonable Creatures; and therefore we will suppose every Elector sufficiently apprized of the Behaviours, Tempers, Principles, and Qualities of their Candidates, and from thence endeavour to lay down such Rules, as can deceive no honest Man who intends to walk by them.

It were a vain Thing to think of reducing Members to their original Institution; that is, by making them the Servants of those they re-

pre-

presented, and paying them as such. It is to be observed, that while such a Method was made use of, the Commons never made any Stand against the Pretrogative, nor were of any Consequence in the World's Opinion. Men who only act for others are generally cool in their Concern for the Success of Negotiations; they who have the greatest Share in their Country's Properties are the aptest and fittest to defend them; from hence it is obvious, that the richest (if otherwise qualified) are the properest for this Employment; such as can do their Duty, led by the Hopes of no other Reward but Honour, and who will the more strenuously support that Fence which they have the greatest Stake in.

Since no Man needs Warning against such Candidates whose Principles, Opinions or Practices mark them out as disaffected to our Religion, or present happy Constitution; if such Men call for our Votes, let us remember that we are Britons and Protestants, and that every unhappy Man who lends his Voice or Interest to them, is, as far as lies in his Power, forgeing Shackles, and kindling Faggots for himself and his Posterity.

Next to such Candidates, are to be considered those who disclaim their Designs, but pursue their Measures. We grant the Pretender's Hopes are small, and his Party weak; that it is almost scandalous for us to be afraid of him: But if there are Men, who thro' Spleen, or for other bad Ends, side with his Friends, oppose his Enemies, and throw such Difficulties in the Way of our Government, as to make Foreign Powers think he has still a strong Interest among us, what do they deserve? The British House
of

of Commons draws the Eyes of all *Europe* upon it when sitting; and if any Diffensions appear, our Neighbours construe them in that *Abjur'd Exile's* Favour. By this Means, every Prince, whom our King refuses to comply with in his most unreasonable and extravagant Demands, plays *him* upon us. This keeps us in perpetual Necessity, either of giving up our Rights to every one that asks for them, or of harrassing our selves with Taxes for the Defence of them. This is the true State of the Case; and no Men have less Reason to clamour at the Bulk of the National Debts, than such as by their perverse Behaviour prevent the Diminution, if not occasion the Increase of them. It is submitted to every reasonable Man, how qualified for, how worthy such Gentlemen are of Voices in the Legislature.

It is a melancholy Truth, that to the Perverseness of such Wranglers, this Realm owed the Burthen of almost Ten Years War in King *William's* Reign, and the Commencement of their present Darling Grievance, the National Debt. The Abdicated King could never be perswaded but he had a great Number of Friends in our Senate, whilst he saw the Reigning Monarch so perplex'd; and Old *Lewis* could not, for a great while, be brought to reasonable Terms with a Prince, who, as he conceiv'd, had as many Enemies to struggle with at home, as were brought against him in the Field.

Of equal Danger to our Rights and Property is the bold ambitious Man, the restless turbulent Spirit, who must be great, cost what it may. This Gentleman, if his most unreasonable Pretensions are not comply'd with at Court, joins the

the factious Herd already mentioned ; and is as loud in his Clamours as the best of them. Those Men who would fit in the House of Commons, because it is a Way to rise, are much to be avoided. If they are loyal, 'tis only for Interest ; the Good of their Country is never at Heart : If they get not Preferments, all goes wrong ; they turn *Patriots*, in Hopes to be taken off. This has been a common Practice, every one's Memory is a sufficient Register of the Sincerity of such Men ; no sooner were Places offer'd, but that which was before *damnable*, then became *divine* ; their Eyes were opened ; so excellent a Perspective is *Advancement* to see the true Interest of one's Country thro'. From Men of this Complexion Heaven keep the Trust of our Laws and Liberties !

There are some Men of a Temper so given to Contradiction and Wrangle, that they will impugn every Proposition that is laid before them ; not so much thro' Malice or Ill-nature, as from a certain malignant Pleasure which they find in Disputation : Such Men are very unfit for a Senate-house ; they will argue against the best concerted Schemes, to prove their Skill at Objections ; run counter to the Interest of their Country, for the sake of shewing their Parts. I have often known a young Man of this Stamp pick'd up and encouraged by the *disaffected Party* ; and so charm'd by their Applauses, and free Liberty of debating, that he unwarily became one of their Assistants, and fell innocently into Faction, because he thought himself obliged to make good his Argument.

As I presume, that every Elector will, at least, be acquainted with the Person and Character

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G

Of FAME.

IF Fame be a thing of no Value, the Poet, the Orator and the Historian are Creatures of very little Use. It is therefore the Duty, and ought to be the Pleasure of such ingenious Men to satisfy themselves and the rest of the World, that a good Name and Reputation with Posterity is a substantial Blessing, and something more than a Chimæra, the Amusement of giddy Brains, and the Idol of Fools and Madmen. This I say ought to be done for their own Sakes, not only because such Glory is most frequently their sole Reward, but because such a Proof is the only Thing that can give their Arts a Value, or their Labours an Estimation.

Now this is not to be performed, if they can't make appear to the World, that true Merit is never to be totally eclipsed by Malice or Envy, that always a Glimmering of Glory will remain, in due Time break out, and strike our Eyes with untarnished Lustre.

Fame is in all noble Minds a chief Incitement to Actions of Heroism; but it is neither a just nor a reasonable Incitement if the Conveyancers of this Fame don't make out a good and clear Title to the fair Purchaser; or, if by some false Step in their Proceedings, they leave it in the Power of the combined Force of Interest and Ignorance to defeat it. Few will take Care to cultivate the Seeds of Virtue, who know what Blasts and Blights are abroad to destroy the Fruit

of it, unless they be first convinced that the beautiful Plant, Palm-like, will one Day be able to resist, and flourish fair, in spite of all Endeavours to suppress it.

I think it my Duty, how inconsiderable soever my Portion in those noble Arts before-mentioned may be, to contribute my Mite towards restoring them to their true and antient Use, and convincing the World of their genuine and real Value. In Order to this, some Abatement must be made of the Worth, which such Artists are but too apt to arrogate to their Performances. It is a mistaken Notion, that a Panegyrist or Satyrift can fix for ever the Characters of those, who are the Subjects of their Writings; Truth must be the Foundation, or the Superstructure can never be firm: Truth has an Elasticity that never will bear a long Suppression; it may be choaked up for a Time by the Weeds of Flattery, or buried perhaps beneath the Rubbish of Invective, but it will at length emerge and force its Way through all Opposition. The Tyrant and the Villain may have their Paths strew'd with Flowers, and their Heads cover'd with Laurels, but the Vegetables will soon fade for want of the natural Moisture that should nourish them; while the Good and Just by travelling in a bad Road, or with bad Company (which is too often the Misfortune of such Men) shall find themselves bemired and bespatter'd: but the Ink of false Satyr has this Property contrary to all others, and resembling Kennel-Filth, to which it is so nearly allied, that it is easily rubb'd out when it dries.

It may be objected, that fulsome Praises, or base Calumnies, may obtain the Force of Tradition

dition before they can be detected and confuted; and it must be confess'd, that a Reliance upon Tradition in other Matters, as well as Religion, is apt to keep Men ignorantly satisfied, or render them prejudiced Enquirers; the weakest Minds take up with the weakest Proofs; which in Understandings so disposed make the deepest Impressions, and the hardest to be eraz'd; as those Trees which grow in Rocky Places, tho' they have the least Soil for their Nourishment, are the most difficult to be grub'd up.

But still the wise and good Man is sure of Fame from Men like himself, for such wo'n't be mis-led; the Bad and Wicked will likewise have their Portions of Infamy dealt to them, by scrutinous and just Enquirers: and this is the only Remedy; except the Learned could be universally perswaded to secure their own Importance, by only coupling Vice with Invective, and Virtue with Praise.

What has been said is I hope understood only of good Writers, the bad are not concerned, they perish too soon to do either Benefit or Mischief to their Subjects. But it is not, as has been said, in the Power of a good Writer to do perpetual Mischief against Truth; he may act a momentary Wrong, but Time and the Integrity of others will repair it. It is not in the Power of *Procopius* with his Anecdotes to mar the great Character of *Justinian*, nor will the Writings of over-weaning Zealots, how long soever they should last, be able to blast the Glories of *Dioscian*.

I think it is for the Interest of the Learned to shew them to be a serviceable rather than formidable People; and that is indeed their Case;

they can't intirely suppress Glory; but they can greatly exalt it; when the Hero has *Virtus*, & *Favor* & *Lingua potentium vatuum* on his Side, no wonder if he is fix'd for ever among Angels and Demi-Gods. What malevolent Writer has it in his Power to unshinge the Reputation of *Trajan*, so justly supported by the Panegyrick of *Pliny*? or who is he that dares attack *Augustus*, surrounded by his invincible Body Guard, *Virgil*, *Horace* and *Livy*?

There are no Set of Men that receive worse Treatment from Writers than Ministers of State and Favourites of Princes; the natural Envy of Mankind, and the awful Veneration paid to the Persons of Kings, throw the whole *Ostium* of whatever is thought blameable in State Transactions upon the prime Minister. In *Turkey* & very now and then a *Visier* is given up to the Fury of the People by the Politick Emperors, and the unhappy Man makes ample Reparation to them, by the Loss of his Life and Fortune, for the Pain which their malignant Envy of his Honours had given them: In *England* the Rabble of Writers seize on the good Name of the obnoxious Statesman, and worry it almost to Death; a Punishment not less to be dreaded than the other, if we may believe the famous Roman Emperor *Alexander Severus*, whose constant Saying it was, that he feared less the *Assaults* of a hundred Lances than the Attack of a single Pen.

No Minister ever felt more of this than Robert Earl Leicester, in Queen Elizabeth's Reign; it was his Lot to live, when the Reformation wanted such able Heads to support it; and his laudable Zeal against the Papal Usurpations, drew upon him the Hatred of all the Bigots at home;

home; and the whole Kennel of Jesuits, with *Serada* at the Head of them, resolved to hunt down his Reputation abroad; they described him cruel, bloody, covetous, lustful, and in short, tack'd the whole List of Vices and Crimes to his Character; yet such is the Force of Truth, how fruitless all! is there now a reasonable *Englishman*, who does not bless his Memory for the Share he had in securing our Religion and Liberties from Foreign Tyrants and Domestick Zealots? who does not allow him to have deserved, as well as held the Favour of two Sovereigns of this Kingdom, and to have died full of Glory, after having greatly contributed to the Relief of the *Netherlands*, the humbling of *Spain*, and establishing the Protestant Interest in Europe?

Magna est Veritas & prevalebit is a good Consolation to such as are undeservedly defamed. But let not a great Minister hope to escape Confusion; neither the Goodness of *Cromwell* Earl of *Esex*, nor the Wisdom of *Dudley* Earl of *Leicester*, could defend them living, tho' Truth and Candour encountered the Malice which would pursue them dead, and have long since absolutely defeated it.

August 12.

1727.





Of A D V I C E.

GIVING Advice, according to an ingenuous Modern, is only taking the Liberty of saying a *foolish Thing*, under Pretence of hindering another from doing *one*. This is a very just Account of the Matter, and one would think needs not many Words to prove it so; yet since there are Folks enough who live and act as if they were not convinced of this important Truth, let us waste a little Ink in some harmless Reflections upon the Nature and Use of *Advice* in general.

The Value of common Advice is methinks easily perceiv'd in the Readiness which most People discover to part with it. Wisdom, say the Sages, is more precious than Gold, yet the coldest Friend a Man has, shall deal it out to him in Heaps, and without any mercenary Views of Remuneration. One may judge of its Worth as the poor Man did of the Bishop's Blessing, since those Men will readily bestow it to us, whom no Considerations could prevail upon to give us any thing else.

Not less remarkable is the Use most People who receive Advice turn it to; good Counsel, they say, is as good as *old Gold*, and they seem to consider it so, they take it from their Friends as they do Family Pocket-Pieces from Relations, which they generally keep close in their Purses, and never spend or change but in extraordinary Emer-

Emergencies; and as a Man cannot be reckon'd much the richer for one of these unalienable Presents, so he seldom grows much the wiser from t'other. It was an odd Character that Monsieur *Menager* gave one of the late King *James's* Counsellors, that he was neither fit to give nor take Advice: The latter Part of the Charge I except to; it is impossible but he must have understood to take Advice properly, that is, as most sensible People do, to *take no Notice of it.*

Tho' most of the Dealers in Advice may be plac'd in the Category of Impertinent, yet there are some who deserve a milder Share of Reproof than others; of this kind are Physicians and Lawyers, who may be fairly allow'd to sell their Advice, since that is a full Proof of their having more Sense than those who buy it.

There is no Set of People more apt to run into the Impertinence of giving Advice than we the learned Authors of the Age, tho' at the same time no Body can receive it more Cavalierly. A fine Gentleman ought to take Counsel as he would lose Money at Play, with all the Indifference and Inattention he is Master of; but it's proper to give it as if he were in earnest: This I think we observe pretty well, guided by the great Rule of Nature, which directs that no Creature shall be so fond of another's Follies as of his own.

What Numbers of excellent Discourses are written in this Style? I could reckon several hundreds, whose Title Pages begin with *Advice to this and that and t'other*, which tho' many have read, yet is no Man the wiser for. What Advantage

vantage can Advice undemanded produce, when ever in Cases where 'tis ask'd for, not one in ten but has fix'd his Resolution before he receives it?

How pressing have some of our Contemporaries lately been with their Advice to the Free-holders and Electors of Members for their ensuing Parliament? and how well did the World receive and observe their Instructions? It had been impossible for the ingenious Authors to give Counsel in so convincing and pathetick a manner, if they had not been used to receive it like Men of the World.

The Appetite of giving Advice has infected all sorts of People. In a Word, so epidemic is this Folly grown, that the most sacred of Characters has not escaped the Insults of it: Nor has the Distance between the Throne and the Cottage protected the former from the familiar Admonitions of the latter, of which some Instances are to be found among the late Addresses. Sure so growing a Vice ought to have some Bounds set to it; but perhaps he that goes about that will be thought as ridiculous an Adviser as any of his Contemporaries. I shall therefore say no more of it, but that giving Advice when asked is an idle unnecessary Task and a fruitless Labour; giving it unasked, has a Complication of Follies in it; to an Equal 'tis impertinent, to an Inferior arrogant, and to a Superior insolent.

I shall wind up this Discourse with a Story of a Piece of Advice well given, and I think as well receiv'd, which I formerly read in Tavernier's Travels.

The

The Turkish Emperor, Mahomet the Fourth, was a Prince exceedingly addicted to his Pleasures; amongst which the Delight he took in Hunting was the Chief. The Mischiefs which his Dogs and Horses did the Country in these Sports, and his frequent harassing of the Peasantry, who upon these Occasions were obliged to forsake their Husbandry, and inclose the Country in a Circuit of many Leagues, to prevent the Game's escaping, added to his little Care of their Lives and Limbs which he always prefer'd his Dogs to, occasioned a general Repining and Discontent among the People. None of his Officers, tho' they all perceiv'd the bad Effects that were likely to arise from hence, had Resolution enough to advertise the Sultan of it, except the *Mufti*, who at length took Courage, and spoke to this Purpose.

He represent'd to *Mahomet*, that it had been the Custom of the Greek Emperors, and since that, of his Ancestors the *Turkis*, whenever they had Leisure from Wars or Matters of State, to employ it in working at some handycraft Trade: from whence flow'd two excellent Advantages to the State; the one was, that the Prince's Example made his Subjects diligent and industrious; the other was, that by his Handywork the Monarch maintained himself, and was not meanly supported by the Labours of his People.

He instanc'd Sultan *Amurath*, who was excellent at making those Horn Rings which are used in shooting with the long-Bow; and *Hethim* the Father of his Highness, who was a great Artist in the framing of Tooth-picks and other Instruments of Tortoise-shell: He shew'd the Methods

Methods by which those Occupations were made so gainful as to maintain these Princes; that when they had finished any Piece of Work, they sent it to be sold to some Bassa or other great Man, who, besides a considerable Present to the Bearer, in Testimony of his Esteem for the Emperor's excellent Workmanship, paid a very large Price for it; and the Money arising from such Manufactures was all that was set apart for the Expence of the Royal Table. He proceeded to demonstrate how much more reputable it was for a King to live thus by his own Labour, in compliance with the Law, than by laying Burthen and Taxes upon the People, poorly to feed up on the Sweat of other Mens Brows.

The Emperor, dissembling his Anger, prais'd the good Examples of his Predecessors, promis'd to consider what Busines he himself was fit for, and fancy'd he had hit upon one, which in a little time he'd go about. In pursuance of this, the Dogs and Horses seem'd for some Days to have been forgotten; at length, the Emperor riding out happen'd to kill a Hare with a Gun, which being the first he ever destroy'd in that Manner, he dispos'd of thus: He sent it by a great Officer to the *Mufti*, with this Message, That he had follow'd the Advice of his Holiness, that the Profession he apply'd himself to was that of a Huntsman, and that he thought no one so proper as his Holiness to purchase this first Work of his Imperial Hands; he also sent a private Hint, that the Messenger deserved Twenty Thousand Crowns for his Labour, and that the *Mufti* knew too much of these Matters to set a mean Price upon the Work of a Royal Artift.

The

The *Musti* found himself caught, but put the best Face upon it; shew'd great Joy at the Honour his Master had done him, gave the Messenger the Twenty Thousand Crowns as directed, and paid for the Hare Sixty Thousand more: Thus it cost him Fourscore Thousand Crowns to find out the Truth of this now well known Axiom, That to give Advice without being called to for it, is always foolish, and often dangerous.

September 9.

1727.



Of

~~ESSAYS ON THE SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION.~~

Of CONVERSATION.

To Sir.

SIR,

As your Paper is frequently employ'd in Dissertations upon Religion and Government, which are allow'd to be the two fittest Topicks for the Discourse of wise Men; I hope an Inquiry how that Matter ought to be manage'd, will not be thought foreign to your Design: It is upon this Hope that I venture to present the World with the following loose Thoughts, irregularly thrown together on the Subject of Conversation.

Conversation is the Cement of Society: This is a Truth which certainly few People are apriz'd of, or there would not be found among Mankind so general a Neglect and Remissness of improving an Art at once so advantageous to All, and so pleasing to every Particular. It is a Proof of the Benevolence of human Nature, that we can't taste Pleasures which are not communicable; the Pain that is found in keeping Secrets, sufficiently demonstrates this; but the Pleasures of conversing well are still further Proofs: He that is Master of this Science enjoys as it were a Reverberation of Happiness, when he leaves the Company he has entertain'd; he carries away a Joyousness of Mind, rais'd on his own Account, but heighten'd in proportion to the Joy communicated to them, and may be said

said to receive back with Interest the Pleasure he has given to others.

So many are the Requisites both from Nature and Education, to fit a Man up for fine Conversation, that it would be Presumption either to attempt defining it, or the Manner of becoming Master of it: We can't say positively, that this or that is it, but we can say what is not; we may venture to define it by Negatives, as Mr. Cowley has done Wit, to which in this Respect it bears a Resemblance; and they both have this in common with Light, that nothing else can justly represent them.

The most directly opposite to good Conversation, is an argumentative Faculty which prevails much, but chiefly amongst young Men: Contradiction ought to be sparingly used; it is the Kindler of vast Contention, yet there are some who apply it upon every occasion. I have been in Company where I dared not have said that I lived, thought, or existed, without preparing a Stock of Syllogisms to prove it in form: Others there are, that if you assert Snow is white, snap you up short, deny the Existence of Colours, and foil you at once; when you have given up that, about they turn, find Reason in what you said, and prove you were at first in the Right, and all this to shew their Dexterity at Argument: Such Men shall argue me into any thing but a good Opinion of their Understanding.

Next to your meer Fool, your prime Wit has the least Pretence to an Excellence in Conversation; his Discourse is seldom stock'd with Observations useful in Life; you seldom hear any thing from him that makes you either wiser or better; merry indeed you may be, for he deals in

in Mirth; Flight and Flash are all he studies, which often prove offensive, never agreeable; if he happens to have an ill-natur'd Turn, as ten to one he has, his Company take his Freedom amiss; if he wants it, all he says goes for insipid; or what is worse, that Affectation of Wit which is observed in him, is liable to be considered as insolent. Men ought not to behave as conscious of what the World reckons Advantages in any respect: To express or hint a Superiority in Birth or Fortune, over those we converse with, is both unjust and disgusting; for the same Reason the Man who by every Word he says, is endeavouring to insinuate that he has more Wit than his Company, is a most intolerable Companion.

But if the good Jester be so bad, what is the insipid one? Doubtless beneath Censure; the harmless Creature that retails Puns and Quibbles, whose Joke is only Jingle, who, for want of Thought, seldom gives Offence, and never can give Pleasure, who laughs as heartily at his own Impertinence, as if he saw the Silliness of it: A Voice and Tongue are common Pests, when trusted in such Hands; and his being able to utter articulate Sounds, is the greatest Misfortune that can befall his Acquaintance. Of the same Stamp are those whom we call clever Men among the Ladies. I am sorry I am forced to dissent from such as make their Taste the Standard of Politeness. I have a great Regard for the Fair Sex, in Consideration of which, I hope, they'll allow me their Pardon, when I make a Difference between Chat and Conversation.

A most offensive Animal is the Dictator in Conversation, the Man that speaks Sentences, nods gravely, looks wisely, and shrugs shrewdly; talk of any Affair, tho' never so far removed from his Sphere of Life, and he'll advise you how to act in such Circumstances, tell you how he would behave, and concludes with a solemn Admiration of his own Wisdom: These Men are so prodigal of their Advice, that one would think they knew the value of it.

Neither the talkative nor the silent Man are capable of making a Figure in good Conversation, tho' both their Qualifications are very often called for in the good Companion, who, with proper Management, may appear very entertaining in his Discourse, as well as very sensible in his Silence.

The Pedant of every kind will stand excluded, for the same Reason with the witty Man; but it must be observed, that the Reason is much stronger against the one than the other; for all Ostentation of Learning is the Result of Ignorance and Pride, while an Attempt to be witty may sometimes proceed from an harmless Disposition to Mirth, or an Endeavour to create it in others.

The Superficialist, or as he is commonly called, the Universal Man, is a most intolerable Composition of Impertinence; to a Smattering in several Sciences, if by chance he can add a good Elocution and a pretty parcel of flowing Sentences and sounding Expressions, he assumes the Name of Eloquent, he harangues his Company to Death; long-winded Speeches are no Pain to him; if you compliment him as learned, he

answers, these are his Amusements; if as witty, 'tis for his Ease, 'tis a Relaxation from greater Studies. In short, he is a Politician, a Wit, and a Philosopher in the Revolution of an Evening. This Man is much to be pitied; he takes as much pains to be thought a Fool, as another would to be thought wise; and indeed it were better for him and for his Friends, that he had been a downright tractable Dunce, than as he is, an impudent assuming Coxcomb.

It would be endless to enumerate all the Follies and Impertinencies that are to be met with in Conversation; but among those I have reckoned, there is hardly one that has not its Admirers, and does not pass upon some People for the Standard of Politeness: I don't believe they appear in that Light to you, nor to any one, whom Prejudice does not blindfold; but it's so hard a Thing to attain Perfection, that some who have had Virtues which produced the Admiration of others, and at the same time border'd upon Faults, which their Friends were kind enough to overlook, have pass'd for Examples of those Virtues which they possess'd, while the undiscerning Imitators took all in gross; and as Vices and Virtues are so near, as to be hardly divided, they copy'd, for the most part, their Vices, as they found them easiest to be practis'd; or copy'd their Virtues so ill as to disguise them entirely. Thus one Man of Sense hath made many Fools, and by this Method preserved a Succession of Follies, thro' several Ages, in the Reputation of Wisdom and good Sense.

I will conclude this Discourse, by giving the Characters of two of my Acquaintance; and that

it

it may not be foreign to our Purpose, I shall consider them chiefly as they make up their Parts of Society, and according to their Talents in Conversation. *Celsus* is good-natur'd, easy and affable. *Niger* is naturally stiff, insolent, and sullen; but by observing *Celsus*, he thinks he ought to be imitated; which while he is endeavouring to perform, he becomes affected, impudent, and fawning. *Celsus* has Wit and Learning, is eloquent and jocose, instructive and diverting: *Niger* wants all these Qualities, but is resolved to have something like them; and therefore is impertinent and nonsensical, noisy and insipid, dull and offensive. *Niger* observes, that *Celsus* talks to the Satisfaction of the Company, tallies them gently, and receives their Applause for it; and therefore he begins, fires them with harsh Terms, and then for Raillery, affronts them all round. He remarks, that *Celsus* is gracefully silent, when it is not his Turn to speak; therefore *Niger* sits sullen, but can't do it gracefully, by attending to what is said. When he is not speaking himself, he is either humming or whistling a Tune, or else fingering his Cravat.. Upon the whole, *Celsus* converses tolerably well; and *Niger*, by imitating him, is the worst Companion I ever met with. He fully proves the old Remark, That a Fool can neither think, nor speak, nor act, nor walk, nor stand, nor sit, like a Man of Sense.

I am Yours, &c.

Nov. 18, 1727.

~~THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND~~

On POPE's MISCELLANIES.

To &c.

SIR,

I was not till lately that I met with some Volumes of *Miscellanies* (as they are call'd) in Prose and Verse; tho' I find by Enquiry that they have been many Months published. When I look'd them over, and found that much the greatest part of them had been already printed in one Volume, Octavo, and that all the rest were either very common in single Pamphlets, or in old Collections, and compared all this with the Greatness of the Price those Books bore, I began to fancy that it was some Bookseller's Fraud upon the Publick, and indeed was not a little suspicious of my old Friend in the Strand: But when I cast my Eye over the *Preface*, I was strangely surprized to find it sign'd with the great Names of *J. Swift* and *A. Pope*. The latter of these Gentlemen, I heard, had been often concerned in such kind of Jobbs, and hired out his Name to stand *Centinel* before the Inventions of Booksellers; but the former, I had always observed, was very cautious of prefixing his Name even to such of his own Works as were published by himself: Therefore having a Curiosity to know what could prompt him to join the other in so *reputable* a *Piece of Journey-work*, I read over the *Preface*; upon which I must take the Liberty to make the following Animadversions.

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The first Thing we meet with here (and indeed half the Work is taken up with it) is a Page or two of severe Satire upon Booksellers, particularly one *Edmund Curll*. I won't enter into the Occasion or the State of the Controversy, or the Strength of these Gentlemen's Rillery and Reasoning; but is it not truly pleasant to see two of the greatest Genius's of our Age set their Wits to a paltry Bookseller?

*Egregiam vero laudem, & spolia amplia refertis,
Una, dolo Divitum, si Fæmina vita, duorum, est.*

Says *Virgil's Juno* upon a similar Occasion; which, I think, with respect to the Transaction before us, may be thus translated:

*Your Triumphs, O ye Bards, proclaim, and all
your Flags unfurl,
For Doctor Swift and Mr. Pope have conquer'd
Edmund Curll.*

Henceforward let no little Under-Wits disdain to write against *Curll*, if he provokes them, (as I have known several give themselves such Airs) since the two Leaders of the Muses Bands have put their Names to a Libel upon him. Rejoice therefore, O *Edmund Curll*, and let thy Gladness know no End, since thou hast had the Honour to be satyrized by the same Pens, which have been employed in lampooning the Duke of MARLBOROUGH and Mr. ADDISON.

In the next place, some Adversaries, which the Prefacers formerly had, fell a-new under their Resentment. They talk of having receiv'd the greatest Provocations, and triumph in the

Fall of their Antagonists, whose Works are now forgotten. Whoever these Adversaries were, 'tis my Opinion they remember their Works as well as our Authors can pretend to forget them; and if they had known or practised the little Arts of Authorship, the World might be brought to recollect them also. It is an easy Matter to keep the dullest Stuff aliye by the Art of multiplying Impressions, which consists only in the Variation of Types, Title-Page, Size and Paper. Mr. *Curll* is so great a Master of this, that I don't wonder at his falling under the Resentment of such People as intended to make a Monopoly of it.

But while these Gentlemen are professing all the Candor imaginable in page 9, the natural Acrimony of their Tempers appears in this, that they cannot conclude the Paragraph, without by one Stroke abusing two great Characters; the one a Man of Wit, Mr. *Congreve*, whom they can have no reason to be angry with, except that he excels them; the other a Man of Quality, a Secretary of State, whom I won't presume to name, and from whose excellent Character I cannot conceive any Reason for their Malice.

In page 13, and other places of the *Preface*, these Miscellanies are called by the Authors, not *Works* or *Labours*, but *Diversions* and *Amusements*. If I mistake not, the greatest part of them are political inflammatory Pamphlets. Is it for a Divine or a Christian, to treat such Matters so lightly? Is not this (like the Man in the Proverbs) to scatter *Firebrands, Arrows, and Death*, and cry, "Am I not in Sport?"

If any Thing can be more impudent than this, it is the Assertion in the next Paragraph, that all these Writings are *innocent*, &c. The first Pamphlet in the Book was professedly written to divert the Justice of the Nation from falling upon some great Men, who were impeach'd by the House of Commons in the last Year of King WILLIAM's Reign. If the Design of it had been to show their Innocence, I could readily grant the Affirmation of these Authors; but it is palpably to charge the Representatives of the Nation with Folly and Injustice, to prove that such Proceedings would in the End be the Ruin of our Constitution, and that the Liberty of the Commons was a Way to introduce Tyranny, and destructive of the Rights of the People. But Opinions which are only *Amusements*, may be easily shifted; therefore *John Bull* is written: And is not this an innocent Pamphlet? Yes, truly, for it only put the Nation into as great a Ferment as Dr. Sev'erel's Sermon: Gentlemen-Prefacers, the Frogs in the Fable will tell you, that *this may be Sport to you, but it is Death to us.*

In page 14. it is said of those Writings, that "they are Ours." Whose, is the Name of God? are they *all* the Doctor's and *all* the Squire's? for there is no Mark to distinguish one Author's from t'other's thro' the whole Books. But it seems they are such good Friends, that they are satisfy'd to share all the Blame as well as Praise of each other's Works. I am glad of this for two Reasons; first, because whatever I have said of either may serve for both, which is some trouble saved; and secondly, because it is a Proof of their Insincerity, when they pretend

to call them *Trifles* and *Idleness*: for whatever a Man may do by his own *Amusements*, he would never father what he really thought the *Follies* of another.

We are told in the same Paragraph, that the World "ought in Justice to believe they are "all that are *Ours*." How can this be? This is a Bite upon the Bookseller, who, from the first Period of the *Preface*, we have Reason to believe has bargain'd for a *third Volume*. A third Volume is there promised; and in page 15, "all the *Papers* in which we have had casually "any Share." Then may the World expect to see some of the Poison so plentifully scattered about in the *Examiners*. — *More innocent Amusements!*

But to crown all Absurdities, in the last quoted Page, two other Gentlemen are introduced to help to father those Writings, in the same manner as above: I won't name those Gentlemen, because it does not appear to me, that they own the Bantlings; but the Devil's in it if ever Children were so well fathered. *Dryden's Multiplicity of Godfathers*, with which he is reproached by a *good-natured Author* that shall be nameless, is not half so ridiculous. This number of Fathers puts me in mind of a *Roman Strumpet*, who being asked who was the Father of a Child she went with, answered very merrily, and perhaps truly, *Senatus Populusque Romanus.*

But, enough of this. If it be asked what Provocations I have received, that I should undertake to treat two such Men so very freely, I can give as good an Account as they do, because I give it in their own Words. Page 19.

"Some

" Some Sallies of Levity ought to be imputed
" to Youth, (supposed in Charity, as it was
" in Truth, to be the Time in which we
" wrote them;) Others to the Gaiety of our
" Minds at certain Junctures, common to all
" Men." To which I will only add, that it is
not unlikely, by the Time I have arrived to ei-
ther of their Ages, I shall repent of this kind of
Petulance as *sincerely as they do.*

I am, SIR,

Novem. 25. 1727.

Yours, &c.



Of

~~ESSAYS AND MONOLOGUES~~

OF POPULAR OPINIONS.

THERE was nothing which the Ancients in general held in more Contempt and Detestation, than the Judgment of the Popular. The Statesman refused to submit his Designs to it; the Philosopher scorned to have his Opinions canvass'd by it; nor would the Poet ever allow it to be the Test of his Fancy: How different is the Practice of some of our ingenious Moderns, who appeal to it in every Case, and in every Character! As Patriots, as Libellers, and as Wits, all they seem to court, is popular Applause; happy for honest Men that it is all they are like to obtain.

According to their Computation, the Rabble was never in the wrong, and the Finger of God always directed the Madness of the Crowd; that which drove Brutus from Rome, and that which brought Massaniello into Naples, were equally infallible, if the general Maxims of these Sophisters may be credited; nor is a riotous Assembly of Journeymen-Artificers to be deemed less inspired, than the holy Penmen of the divine History.

If Government be of divine Institution, or if it be favoured by Providence, as the best Means for the Safety and Preservation of Mankind; sure in either Case, the Mob have no Right to direct how it shall be managed: The Wise-men and Elders of the People are only to be intrusted with that important Charge; nor is it fit to be

be put into the Hands of those, who, from their low Ideas, servile Notions, and perverse Dispositions, seem born to be made happy against their Wills. Let us hear the Son of Sirach upon this Subject; after showing what Honours are to be paid to Learning and Wisdom, he proceeds to shew the Merits of vulgar Craftsmen; he describes several, and concludes thus: *They shall not be sought for in publick Counsel, nor sit high in the Congregation; they shall not sit on the Judges Seat, nor understand the Sentence of Judgment; they cannot declare Justice and Judgment, and they shall not be found where Parables are spoken.* Ecclesiasticus, chap. xxxiii. ver. 33.

It is with pleasure I observe, that the Cavaliers at our Government and Administration are all of this kind, or very nearly related to it; none I believe but the mere Mob, and some few whose Intellects in spite of their Circumstances and Education level them to the Mob, are thoy Principle real Enemies to our present Happiness: So that if you will allow of Copley's Division of the Vulgar into the Great and the Small, we have in reality none but the *Vulgar* to contend with.

When I consider the Mob like a great tractable Monster led about by a popular Scribbler, where and how he pleases, it puts me in mind of what some ancient Naturalists say of the Whale, that he never swims any where without being preceded by a small Fish in Shape and Size like a Gudgeon. This tiny Creature is the Whale's Guide, and therefore protected by him, while all the finny Race besides are his Prey. This Animal the Whale suffers to sleep within his Jaws; he finds his Couch where others find their Graves; nor does the Monster stir till he awakes, then

then follows where-ever he leads. A very plain Moral arises from this Story, that the Whale is a stupid Brute to be led by this Fish, who may draw him upon Shallows, consistent with his own Safety, which the Littleness of his Maker will be apt to ensure; and that the Guide is not overwise to trust himself within those Jaws, which if hungry or provok'd may some time or other snap off his Head.

If a Man were to trace the Proceedings of the Rabble thro' all the Histories of all Nations now extant, he would find their true Character to be, restless, turbulent and injudicious; never pleased for a right Reason, and always dissatisfied from wrong ones: Fame, Virtue, and Prosperity, are the constant Objects of their Envy; Excellence of any kind a ground for their Resentment; and the Prince's Favour, where-ever apply'd, a sufficient Cause for their Hatred. Passion and Prejudice are their constant Guides; and tho' Reformation may be their pretended Purpose, yet Confusion always ensues; their Aim may be the Regulation, but their Actions terminate in the Subversion of whatever they meddle in.

The Seducers of the People sometimes tag to their Flatteries this softening Clause; they say, they are never in the Wrong, when left to themselves. I could almost close with them here; it but rarely happens that their Minds are prone to Sedition, except when they are under the Influence of some plausible Haranguer. Were it not for such false Lights, every Commonwealth might be well steer'd and safely conducted; the Mob of other Countries would consider themselves as intitled to no Share in the Government, and consequently pretend to none; the People here at

at Home would remember, that whatever Part they bear, they have delegated it to their Representatives, and would sit easy, as having rid themselves of so much Trouble. But by the means of such Influence abundance of Mischief has been brought about; such a leud seditious Orator as *Clodius* has thrown the Mob into a Ferment, which the Wise, the God-like *Cato* could not appease.

Strong Passions and weak Minds are the proper Materials for such an Artist to work upon; the People furnish these in great Plenty, and therefore have in all Ages been made the Instruments of much Calamity to themselves and their Country; the Mischief they have done abundantly counterpoises the Good; it is therefore always a dangerous Experiment to set them at Work; kindling Sedition is like spreading Fire, which a Man may not be able to stop till it burns down his own House. But let us examine what have the Mob done; if they tore *Sejanus* to pieces, they banished *Coriolanus*, and murdered *Phocion*; if they drove out *Marius*, they shouted in *Sylla*, a less eligible Tyrant; if they made *Cato* a Tribune, they would have made *Cæsar* a King; they have in their blind Fury deposed their Monarchs, who may by chance have deserved it, but they knew it not: The same blind Fury has prompted them to the worst of Mischiefs; they banished *Aristides*, put *Socrates* to Death, and cry'd out for Judgment even against our SAVIOUR.

But latterly, the Topick that most inflames them, is that of a bad Ministry; name that, and Imprecations ensue. Let them be turned out, they cry; but never think of a better to succeed them.

them. And indeed how should they; for as they can prove no Faults, it's impossible they should pitch upon opposite Virtues in their Successors. *Pacuvius Calavius*, a Senator of *Capua*, treated this Humour of the Mob, with so proper a Contempt and ingenious Management of their Ignorance and Folly, that I will give you the Story, and conclude without making any Application of it.

He found the wise *Plobians* in a Humour of mutinying against the Senate, so made use of the great Authority which he had among the Citizens, to shut up all the Senators as they were consulting in the Senate-House; and then assembling the Mob, harangued them to this Effect: He told them, " Their Slavery was at an End, " that all their Tyrants were in his Power and " at their Mercy; that he would draw them out " one by one, and dispose of them as their " hours pleased; that whatever they decreed " should be presently executed upon every one " of the Villains, provided they would at the " same time agree upon a worthy Successor to " supply his Place. The Terms were assented to; a Senator's Name was read, and presently an outcry of Curses and Exclamations from the sage Mob attended it; he added his Voice, that the Offender was the most infamous of Men, and deserved the worst of Deaths; but put them in mind of their Promise, to chuse a Successor before he was executed. They at first stood silent; at length some of the most impudent named one, which others made a hundred just Objections to. These Contradictions led them into Quarrels with one another. A second and third Senator was proposed to them; they condemned them, but

but could not agree upon their Successors; Confusion arose among them, some sneaked away through Shame and Fear, and the rest were driven home in a tumultuous manner by one another. When they could they acknowledged the Wisdom of PACUVIUS, and agreed, that *as to chuse Governors was not their Talent, they had no Right to the displacing of them.*

July 13. 1718.



Of

~~SECRET HISTORY OF THE STAGE~~

Of STAGE-PLAYS.

To &c.

SIR,

I Believe you agree with me in Opinion; that the Stage is an Object not altogether below the Thoughts of a wise Man; and therefore I hope you'll indulge me in an Attempt to clear it from Misrepresentations, and an Endeavour to prove it an Entertainment not only proper and rational, but useful and expedient in every wise or warlike Nation.

It is the Misfortune of Scenical Poetry, to have been, among the Heathens, a Religious Worship as well as a Political Entertainment; almost all kinds of Poetical Compositions partook of the Nature of Religion also. This was what brought them into the sincere Detestation of the earliest Christians; who, many of them, ran to the Extremity, first of crying down Poetry, and then all Heathen Learning, as if they intended to reduce all Things to Ignorance and Barbarism.

The Emperor *Julian*, who hated the Christians, saw this Humour of their Teachers with Pleasure; he saw Miracles had ceased, and he well knew what Contempt a Religion must fall into without them, which had peevishly divested itself of all Assistance from human Learning: He therefore took them at their Words, and enforced the Documents of the Fathers by an Edict

dict of his own; he ordained that no Person professing Christianity should read what they called prophane Books, or any others but what meerly related to their Religion, or frequent the publick Schools, or use any Methods to be acquainted with Clasical Learning. This might, if he had lived long enough, have done vast Mischief; but the Christians of that Time took the Alarm, and provided against the Danger: They soon resolved, that the Advantages drawn from such Studies were not to be given up, but as the Emperor's Will was to be complied with, they took another Step to secure themselves; they employ'd one *Apollinarius*, who happened to be the most learned amongst them, to turn the Old Testament into an heroick Poem, in Imitation of *Homer*, which was done as far as to the Death of *Saul*; they also put him upon making sacred Odes after the manner of *Pindar*, Tragedies like those of *Euripides*, and Comedies in the Style of *Menander*; which were all performed then, tho' they are unhappily lost to us. Thus *Zozomen*, who wrote an Ecclesiastical History of that Time, tells the Story: But other Accounts inform us, that *Gregory Nazianzen* performed the like laborious Task. Upon this we will make no other Remark, but that the Finger of God, by the means of Tyranny and Persecution, seems to have directed the Christians to a Reconcilement with the divine Science of Poetry.

But it seems, that altho' the profane Origin of Stage-Plays could be forgot, as I see no Reason why it should be remember'd, when the present Practice is so very different from it; yet

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still

still the fabulous, the false, and wicked Representations which they give us, are held by Precisians to be shocking and offensive, as well as contradictory to the Primitive Purity of a Christian Audience: Many old Fathers and Councils are called upon to prove this, and much Triumph does the Proof of it bring to the wrong-headed Zealot. Strange Ignorance and Enthusiasm, that Men should imagine it possible to govern a World, by Rules laid down for the Behaviour of a few hundreds of People! I am bold to say, that if the Doctrines of some Enthusiastic Writers, both antient and modern, were put strictly in Practice, Mankind could not subsist; neither Trade, nor Policy, nor Laws could flourish; the Links which hold People together at present would be broken; no one would take any Care as they say of this Life, but all would run religiously mad; Woods and Caves would be inhabited, and Cities left desolate; nay Matrimony would be laid aside, and the Propagation of Mankind, if possible, put to a Stop: But, thank God, the Wisdom of our Rulers have better ordered it in general, and the poor Stage alone is left to stand the Battery of these superannuated Arguments.

To examine this Charge, we must observe, that what is called Fable and Falsehood is and ever was reputed the Life and Essence of Poetry humane and divine; furnish them with a Moral and the Name of Allegories, and what becomes of their Wickedness? This, I think, is all ought to be said in this Case; for if there be any Theatrical Entertainment that don't answer this Definition, and come within these Bounds, they are

are Exceptions to the true Rule, and ought to receive no Countenance. But to return to Fable; the Practice of the old Prophets, and of our Saviour Christ, who so frequently spoke in Allegory or Parable, are sufficient to justify it. Solomon's Song is not only of this kind, but written in the Dramatick way, that is, in Dialogue. As to the Wickedness, the Book of Job, and some of Christ's Parables, have as bad Characters represented in them, with due Reverence I speak it, as can well be imagined, and yet the Moral has never been thought the worse therefore: Job's Wife, and some of his Friends, and the Tenants in the Gospel, who cheated their Lord and killed his Son, are not all the Instances of this, though they are enough for this Purpose.

Several Shifts have been made to bring some of the Primitive Doctors of the Church into our Side of the Question, and it must be said, not without Success; though it must be still allowed, the Majority are against us, for the Reasons already given. However, St. Paul has been often made to speak for us, in quoting a Verse from Menander, or some other comick Poet whose Works are lost; and Clement of Alexandria is found to have drawn more Arguments against the Heathen Infidelity of his Age, from Greek Comedies, than from all sorts of serious Writings.

It would be needless and prolix to shew the great Usefulness of the Stage; and I wish these few Thoughts, which I think have for the most part, escaped the Managers of the late Controversy upon this Subject, may be of Service in overturning the Arguments against the Innocence

cence and Lawfulness of it. If what has been said can induce People to believe that it is not bad in it self, I hope what may be said hereafter may persuade them to endeavour at an Amendment of those Things belonging to it, which really have a Tendency to the Debauchery and Corruption of Mens Manners.

I am, SIR,

*August 31.
1728.*

Yours, &c.,



of

Of NOBILITY of BLOOD.

To Sc.

SIR,

I Shall beg leave to lay before you some few Thoughts on *Nobility of Blood*: A Theme so much exhausted by the Wits both ancient and modern, that it will be difficult to say any thing new upon it: Tho' it has been observed by a polite Author, that almost every Subject has undergone the same Treatment; so that we who write laterly, can only glean from the Ancients and most ingenious of the Moderns: to which may consequently be added, that judiciously to glean, and so to dispose of our Gleanings, that they may appear in a new Light, and take a Turn somewhat different from their former Positions, is all the Merit, all the Intervention that a Writer at this time of Day is called to.

This Notion has been defended by an Argument, which is brought to prove the Existence of a Deity; that is, the Universality of it. We grant that it is almost universally received through all the Nations of *Europe*, and most strongly and tenaciously by the most barbarous of them, tho' the *Turks* are an Exception even to that. From whence it is plain that it arose among the *Europeans*, from an odd Mixture of some

some of the *Roman* Customs with those of the *Northern* Nations which over-ran the Empire. The *Asiaticks* in general have very little Opinion of it; and particularly, the *Chinese* whom one may venture to place in the first Rank of polite Nations, set so small an Account upon the Accident of a Man's Birth, that the whole Nation knows but one Distinction, that is, between the Magistracy and the Populace; herein observing a just Medium between the State of Nature, where all are equal, and the Condition of Barbarians, where a progressive Tyranny rises from the lowest Subject to the Monarch, and swells in every Hand it passes through: Like the Anarchy of the Seas, where the small Fishes devour the smaller, and are themselves devour'd by the great, who immediately become the Prey of the greater.

Another Argument in favour of this Custom, is the vast Encouragement it is said to give Merit. What will not a brave Man enterprize, when he considers that his Glory is not to die with himself, but to be intailed on his Posterity, who from Generation to Generation are to be honour'd and esteem'd for the Virtues which he had? This is a specious Argument; but is it not the Reverse of Truth? Is not the Filth which Malice throws on aspiring Merit, unaccompanied with this accidental Ornament, more than sufficient to blast the Designs of the most Resolute? It is a poor Consolation for a Man who has spent his Life in Pursuit of Glory, to think that tho' Censure and Revilings shall qualify his Reward, yet his Grandson shall enjoy the Fruit of that Labour. Nothing is more common than

than the Shocks which a rising Man meets with on this Account; the Spleen of all those whose his Merit sets him above, constantly pursues him. And this Usage he shall receive from Men, who, could they read or understand their Ancestors Patent, would find that he was advanced to the Honour they now enjoy, for the same, or perhaps meaner Virtues, than those which dignify the Object of their Contempt.

But let us leave the Great Ones in peaceable Possession of those Dignities and Privileges, which the Wisdom of our Ancestors, and the Laws of our Country, have conferred on them: Let us descend into our own Rank, and enquire what Right we have to treat our Fellow-Subjects with Scorn and Derision, on Account of Advantages that are so meekly notional. And here I must congratulate my Country, on observing that no Nation in *Europe* has gone so far in shaking off this Impertinence, as we have done: We are courteous enough to allow the Name of Gentleman to every one who can live decently without our Assistance; and the Learned of all Professions have been complimented with that Honour, Time out of Mind: Whereas in *France*, and other Countries, that Appellation belongs only to Men of Lands and Descent; the Lawyer, the Physician, and other Professors of Learning, are (as such) excluded from it; in short, no one who follows any Vocation for a Livelihood must pretend to it: Which is in other Words to say, that no Body can be a Gentleman there, who is good for any thing else. Yet still there are those among us, who, in Imitation of them, fancy that a new
Rent-

Rent-Roll and an old Pedigree, without any other Merit, sets them high above the rest of their Rank; though the Wisdom of our Laws has expressly placed us all in one Category. Of this Kind is the *Fox-Hunter*, who can prove by undeniable Testimony, that he is the Fiftieth Fool of his Family since the Conquest; whose Ancestor having got as much Land as was sufficient Five Hundred Years ago barely to maintain his Family, which by the Increase of Riches in the Nation, is now become a handsome Estate, and has continued in his Line uninlarged and undiminished since the first Acquisition; yet shall this Man in the Pride of his Heart overlook with Scorn the honest Citizen, whose Ancestors have for a Length of Years been creditably employed in Trade, from which they have extracted a Fortune superior to his; without ever reflecting, that 'tis owing to the Industry of such Men that his own Estate is sufficient to set him upon a Level with them.

I have heard said as a Reason for this, that a conscious Pride of having been descended from a Race of Men who had lived without a Stain to their Characters, was a great Inducement to keep Men in the Ways of Virtue and Honour. But this is a Mistake; 'tis Education, not Birth, that can have such an Influence over the Minds of Men; and this was the true Reason for giving Esteem to the Persons of Landed Men, because the Sons of rich Men were presumed to have had the best Education, and Lands were formerly the only Riches; but since that ceases to be the Case, why should not the Argument built upon it drop with it?

I expect to hear it urged, that it intitles one to some Respect to be the Descendant of a great Man remarkably famous either in Arts or Arms. But I would fain know why? Does your Descent from him make you either honester, wiser, richer, stronger, or braver? If you reap any of these or any other Advantages from such an Origin, I think you may with reason boast of it, but not otherwise. Besides, who knows or believes that you are so descended? 'Tis many Years since that great Man lived, many Generations have passed since, and can you answser for the Virtue of all the Wives of your Family? This you must do, or all's lost; the least Slip in a Succession of Fifty Ladies throws you out of this mighty Merit; and how precarious is that Honour? Well then, be satisfy'd, inherit the Lands and Arms of that great Man, but boast of no more.

There are a Tribe of Men called *Heralds*, who, like the Priests of old, make their Advantage of the Peoples Ignorance. No sooner has a Man made a Fortune, but he is perswad-ed by them that a Coat of Arms is necessary to make him a Gentleman; which they furnish him with, and take care to be well paid for: But such odd Devices do they equip their Cli-ents with, as frequently appear both absurd and ridiculous. While the Vanity of Traders that make Fortunes lies this way, no Reformation must be expected. Those that have paid for their Gentry, will take all Occasions to let their Inferiors know it, and endeavour to make the most on't: Whereas if they agreed to despise it, they would soon have the greatest part

part of the Lands in the Kingdom in their Hands, and consequently cure their Country of such an Impertinence. In hopes of which I will tell them an Example not unworthy to be followed. A Tradesman of an inferior Class had, by Industry and Frugality, acquired a large Estate in one of the finest Counties in *England*; who dying left it to his Son: The young Man lived in the Country much caressed by all the neighbouring Gentlemen, married into one of the greatest Families, and was returned to serve in Parliament for that County; his good Part and Sense had made him many Friends, but his Munificence more: In fine, a Herald of the Country found him out, apply'd to him, and assur'd him of the Necessity he was under of procuring Arms, since that was the only Accomplishment he wanted, in order to be one of the best Gentlemen in the Neighbourhood. The Gentleman, who by this found out what he would be at, answer'd, That his Father had got an Estate by making good Bargains, and that he intended to keep it by the same Methods; that if the Commodity he dealt in was reasonable, he knew not but he might be a Purchaser. The Herald at first declin'd putting Honour to Sale; but when he found that he might lose his Labour if he refused it, demanded a good Sum of Money; which by degrees came down to Twenty Pieces: The Gentleman modestly assured him he could afford no more than Ten for the Bargain; at which he went away in some Discontent: but the Gentleman followed him to the Door, and putting Ten Pounds in his Hand for his Trouble, spoke thus

thus, Sir, I beg the favour, that, whenever you talk of me, tho' you cannot allow me to be one of the best Gentlemen in the Country, yet you will represent me to be within Ten Guineas of the Matter.

I am, S I R,

Your humble Servant,

*October 26.
1728.*

POPLICOLA.

F I N I S.



